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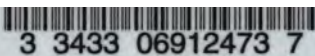
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CHRIST CRUCIFIED:
OR,
A plain Scriptural Vindication
OF
THE DIVINITY AND REDEEMING ACTS
OF
CHRIST.

**WITH A STATEMENT AND REFUTATION OF THE FORMS
OF UNITARIANISM NOW MOST PREVALENT.**

BY GEORGE W. CLARKE.

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me.—CHRIST.

But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privately shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.—PETER.

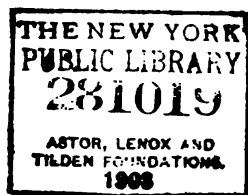
Rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.

PAUL.

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District of New-York.

TO THE CANDID READER.

IN presuming to ask your careful attention to the contents of the following pages, the claim is predicated rather on the intrinsic and acknowledged importance of the great truths presented, than on any supposed superiority of the style or method adopted in presenting them.

The writer, as a plain man, has thought and written for that numerous class who make no special pretensions to erudition, but among whom are very many, who, in the exercise of their sound practical common sense, can well appreciate the strength of a position when it is clearly defined; and who, from their mental habitudes, receive cautiously, having subjected them to a close examination, all arguments designed to affect their opinions concerning the distinguishing doctrines of the Christian system. The doctrines here discussed, though exceedingly precious, and of imperishable interest to the pious reader, will not charm the curious by their novelty. They claim a venerable antiquity, being as ancient as the first promise of help for the lost and perishing. Perhaps an apology may seem necessary for attempting to vindicate them now, after such repeated and *unanswerable* demonstrations of their truth, by men

of rare talents and untiring industry. The faith of the church has been again and again most triumphantly vindicated against the open assaults and subtil sophistries of her enemies; and all the great truths regarded by orthodox believers as essential to our holy religion have long ago been securely fortified by invincible arguments predicated on the infallible word of God. They who have access to, with time to read and inwardly digest, our standard works on theology, will need nothing more. However many phases the protean error of Unitarianism may have assumed, in the present day the antidote might be readily extracted and applied.

But thousands are found everywhere through the country who have not at their command either the means to purchase, or the time to read, extensive works on systematic theology. In providing a book especially for this class, no valuable assistance will be spurned, and I cheerfully acknowledge my indebtedness to the sources already alluded to, as well for many suggestions which cannot now be traced to their originals, as for the pertinent passages which have been transcribed, with the strong persuasion that no attempt to answer or evade their force can prove successful.

While it is hoped for our unassuming little manual, that something will be found in each chapter of which even the learned and professional student of the Bible may avail himself with advantage, the principal design has been to present *the common, intelligent reader*, whose time is mostly

occupied with secular duties, and who has not access to more elaborate treatises, a concise and intelligent view of arguments which, though more valuable than the choicest gold, are nearly lost to multitudes in the religious community, either because they are couched in language not well understood, or expanded to such an extent as to be unavailable.

The object contemplated could not be accomplished without frequent allusion to antagonistic errors; and if an occasional animadversion on the positions taken, and the course pursued, by Unitarians in propagating their doctrines seem severe, and the expressions too strong, I only ask to be indulged in speaking of things by their appropriate names. I dare not call evil, good, or, by speaking of them in soft terms, contribute to render the most baneful and pernicious errors tolerable, or the blasphemies of those who assert them less offensive.

Let it, however, be observed, that it is one thing to use plain speech, or terms strongly descriptive of that to which they are applied, and quite another thing to use them in a *licentious and wanton manner without proof*. "If I arraign a man for theft, and bring the evidence to sustain the charge, I may then call him *thief*." Duty to others may demand that his name of infamy be written; but to apply such epithets without proof would be wrong, and might expose the person using them to an action for the defamation of character.

~~Whether~~ the allegations against Unitarianism

and its advocates are sustained, the reader must judge. Of one thing I am certain; while duty to others required great plainness, not a sentence has been written for the sake of afflicting or giving pain to those who are believed to be in the wrong. Toward them I cherish only sentiments of kindness and good-will, while their principles are reprobated, as alike dishonoring to God and ruinous to the souls of men.

I will only add, that if others derive the same satisfaction and religious advantage from reading these sheets that have been realized in preparing them for the press, the time and labor they have cost will not be regarded as thrown away.

To the "true God," and the "church he bought with his own blood," the work is now humbly dedicated, with fervent prayer that it may be useful in checking the progress of error, and advancing the triumphs of truth.

Through faith in his merits may each thoughtful reader obtain the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Allegheny College, March 8th, 1848.

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CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

DOCTRINES OF THE CROSS STATED.

“And they crucified him.”

CHRIST and his vicarious sufferings, the cross and the Crucified, have ever been fraught with peculiar interest to the heart of the pious believer. He often, like Moses in the wilderness, turns aside to behold this great sight, and lingers amid the scenes of Calvary with feelings of subdued, unutterable emotion. What miracles of love and mercy are passing before him while he looks on the agony of that spotless Victim who bleeds and dies for sinners, and on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all! Here is a power at once to humble and exalt the contrite; to wound and heal the broken heart. Boasting is excluded; for in the light that emanates from the cross, sin appears exceeding sinful, yet does grace much more abound:

“And sinners may hope,
For the Saviour hath died.”

Thousands of hearts, quickened by the death of Christ and washed through his sanctifying blood, have echoed the language of Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;" while the whole company of evangelical ministers who serve at the altars of his church, having kept the faith, declare, "We preach Christ crucified." This, beyond doubt, was the alpha and omega in those strangely efficient ministrations of the apostles. The only door of hope they opened for the despairing sinner was through a propitiatory sacrifice: having stated this doctrine with remarkable clearness, as we will hereafter see, they guard it by fearful denunciations against those who attempt to teach some other way of justification. "If we," say they, "or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed."

But it cannot be denied, that among those who are called Christians, and profess to receive the testimony that God has given of his Son, very different opinions concerning the character and work of Christ have obtained. It is not important, in this place, to trace the history of errors which have prevailed; but it is due to the candid reader that I give here a summary *statement of what we believe to be implied*

in preaching Christ, as was done by the apostles.

1. They distinctly recognized the fallen and naturally corrupt state of man, under condemnation and exposed to eternal death, as the occasion which, in the judgment of Infinite Wisdom, demanded and justified the incarnation and subsequent redeeming acts of the Son of God.

2. As his chosen witnesses, they set forth and establish the wonderful facts connected with his advent, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension—facts glorious to the Sufferer, and means of joyous exultation to his followers.

3. As to his *character*, they proclaimed him the “Immanuel, God with us”—in nature equal with the Father—teaching everywhere that He who was in the beginning with God, and was God, was made flesh; that is, he took on him our nature, in which, by the suffering of death, he made propitiation for sin, satisfied the claims of the law, removed all obstacles in the way of our pardon arising from the divine justice, and made it possible for God to be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth.

4. In applying these truths, they urged upon all the duty of immediate and cordial reliance on the merits of the atonement, as the only way of salvation: they showed in the most convincing

manner that pardon, peace, and heaven, are obtained through faith in the Crucified, while "he that believeth not shall be damned."

It is certain that the preaching of these doctrines excited much opposition. To the Jew they were a stumbling-block, to the Greek foolishness. The carnal heart then, as now, rose against them, and variously indicated its settled hostility. Still they were preached by men who knew whereof they affirmed, and gladly counted all things but loss for the excellency of this saving knowledge committed to them. It is needless to tell how the cross triumphed, and opposers were silenced; how multitudes turned from lying vanities to serve the living God; while the pride of science was abased, and the learned, abjuring the vain reasonings in which they boasted themselves, confessed that the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

But the victory is not yet consummated, and the old antagonists, truth and error, are still in the field of conflict—the strife may be protracted and severe, but the result is not doubtful.

That very plausible objections are still urged against these doctrines is readily admitted; yet, however specious, they are certainly without any real foundation, as we will attempt to show *in a subsequent part of this work*. It is enough

to say here, that all objections, however ingeniously framed, which respect the nature of the doctrines, are manifestly unphilosophical, because based on an erroneous estimate of the powers of the human understanding. They assume, contrary to evidence, that man is capable of understanding the nature of the Deity, and able to decide what is, and what is not, possible as to the declared manner of his mysterious and infinite existence. The folly of this assumption is so obvious, that conclusions drawn from it can have no force when attention is directed to it. Surely all reflecting men must admit that many things revealed as facts, and which seem, in the dim light of an imperfect reason, to be unaccountable and irreconcilable, may yet proceed from a depth of wisdom which our line cannot fathom. Things that are seen only in part, contemplated by the disordered intellect of a creature who is blind and cannot see afar off, may appear disproportioned and monstrous; while to the all-seeing Eye, which takes in at a glance all created existences and their multiform relations, the same things may appear quite otherwise: in a word, while our wisdom is comparative folly, and our light but darkness, for this very reason the wisdom of God may sometimes seem foolishness to men.

But what can be more absurd than to judge the deep counsels of an infinitely wise God by the standard of our imperfect and unsatisfactory knowledge? The folly of this course, so often practically adopted, can be equaled only by its impiety; both are great. May God save the reader from such a speculative habit as dares thus to trifle with the great truths of revelation!

It is to be expected that he who espouses and advocates evangelical sentiments will be denounced, by self-styled liberalists, as a stupid bigot, incapable of appreciating their liberal theory. But neither infidel sneers nor abusive epithets can lessen our attachment to truths so vastly important. We know their excellence—it is capable of an easy demonstration; to the believer they are precious, and invest his Saviour with a character altogether lovely.

Being quite confident that the doctrines of the cross, as imperfectly stated above, are fundamental in the system of revealed truth; that the vitality, the living, transforming energy of religion, is wholly wanting in every theory that rejects them; I earnestly beseech the thoughtful reader not to dismiss the subject without a patient, thorough investigation. If you doubt, first seek wisdom from above; then “come and let us reason together.”

CHAPTER II.

THE SUFFICIENCY AND AUTHORITY OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

IT is necessary to the force of moral reasonings that there be some acknowledged standard by which to test our hypotheses and arguments. For this reason, before proceeding to quote passages from the Bible in proof of particular doctrines, it is important to ascertain what authority attaches to the records. If the competency of our witnesses be doubted, their testimony will be of little worth: but if the Bible is indeed a revelation from God, and well authenticated; if the several authors spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and made their communications, "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" a reasonable man will receive such statements as authoritative—he cannot hesitate to believe them. Even where the truths communicated may be of such a nature as far to transcend our limited faculties, and of consequence greatly mysterious, the *facts* are admitted; and in this his faith is surely most rational, because authorized by the whole

amount of evidence which proves the divinity of the records. When once satisfied that the canonical Scriptures are the word of God, the truth or reasonableness of the doctrines they reveal is no longer a subject of inquiry. The only question is, What is taught? and the only concern of our reasoning faculty is with the correct interpretation of the language. It should be distinctly understood that many facts are stated on divine authority, and, therefore, embraced in the faith of the rational believer, the *grounds* or *reasons* of which not having been made the subjects of revelation, and lying beyond the field of our vision, are wholly unknown. Stupid ignorance may pronounce them unreasonable and absurd, with a positiveness equal to that once manifested in the utter denial of many important and long since demonstrated principles of the physical system; but the sensible Christian will remain unmoved by any such infidel clamor. He cleaves to his Bible as in truth a revelation from Heaven, especially designed to be his guide and rule in all matters of religious faith, and with humble awe believes the sublimest mysteries that it teaches. Anything short of this is infidelity, and tends directly to unsettle the foundations of religious confidence. If the rule God has given has not ab-

solute supremacy, that is, the prerogative of fixing authoritatively what must be believed as true, and so believed because of the truthfulness of Him who has declared it, then are we doomed to perplexing doubts and distressing uncertainty on many points intimately connected with our present and everlasting well-being. If we are to receive revealed truths only so far as their reasonableness is discovered, we may reject much that is written in the Bible; for many facts and doctrines are there recorded about which reason has not one syllable to utter, and with regard to many more her testimony is pronounced in a faltering and indecisive manner. Such are all the facts touching the manner of the divine existence and the future destiny of mankind—here all analogies must be obscure and unsatisfactory. Busy conjecture may indulge a thousand idle vagaries, but the soul finds nothing secure to rest upon. All is painful uncertainty; only confusion and bewilderment ensue from our most subtil speculations. “I profess,” says Chillingworth, “that I can find no rest for the sole of my foot but on this rock of ages; there is no sufficient certainty for a considering mind to rest upon but the Bible.”

What a sweet relief it is to one wearied with

the fruitless attempt to solve what is too wonderful for him, or ascertain some great truth which lies in depths he cannot reach, to be assured he will find it divinely attested in the Bible! In the midst of the uncertainty that attends his investigations, how refreshing to hear Paul preface the disclosures he makes, by saying, "I certify you that the gospel preached by me is not after man, neither was I taught it by man, but by the Holy Ghost!" Indeed, if we rightly understand the mind of the Spirit, one especial object contemplated in making the revelation was, to furnish man certified knowledge on subjects either wholly or in part beyond the reach of his natural powers. This one expressly affirms: "Have I not written unto thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, *that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth?*" And to all Christians who recognize the plenary inspiration and absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures, the apostle John declares, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and *know all things.*" They cannot question the *reasonableness* of revealed truths. The character in which they receive the lively oracles forbids it. They know that what God affirms must be true and rational. The passage *quoted does not assert that the consistent be-*

liever is *acquainted with all things*; but his knowledge is not the less *certain* because it is limited. So far as it extends, his knowledge is altogether certain and satisfactory, being essentially unlike the groundless conjectures of those who foolishly lean to their own understanding.

Let no one be deceived by an empty profession of reverence for the Scriptures, while those making it yet recognize some higher standard by which the doctrines of revelation are to be tested. They who call themselves "liberal Christians," and make reason the umpire—feeling at liberty to interpret all passages to suit their own notions of propriety—must presume greatly on our credulity, when they talk of their high estimate of the Bible as the word of God. They do not admit its supreme authority as a rule of faith, and refuse the testimony of whatever portions are at variance with their own prejudiced views of truth. Many notorious unbelievers have occupied the same ground; they, too, admire the beautiful simplicity of the inspired volume, and admit many truths it contains, as being also taught by what they call natural religion. They only, like "liberal Christians," deny what lies against their own theory, on the ground that the writers were fallible men, and, like other men, some-

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times mistaken. For these infidel notions concerning the precious Bible we have no fellowship; and more especially do we despise the hypocrisy of those who hold and disseminate them under the specious cover of a religious profession. In this way the enemies of evangelical religion have often succeeded, when an honest avowal of their real sentiments would have quite defeated their object. Against all such insidious attacks the young and unwary are affectionately admonished.

CHAPTER III.

SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED — WHAT IS ABOVE REASON IS NOT, THEREFORE, UNREASONABLE.

THEY who oppose the distinguishing features of religious doctrine, as held by the orthodox churches, often complain that we ask them to believe what is contrary to reason. This is not true; and the hackneyed cant of most Unitarian writers about the “contradictions, paradoxes, and mathematical absurdities,” of our faith, deserves the severest animadversion. Men of ordinary intelligence cannot indulge in this course with an honest conviction that their al-

legations are founded in truth. It is wholly *ad captandum vulgus*; and a few common-sense remarks will enable the humblest mind, capable of appreciating an argument, to detect the imposition that is attempted. The latent sophistry is found in the peculiar meaning attached by the objector to the word *reason*.

It is readily admitted that no one has any right to deduce from the Scriptures doctrines which are contrary to *reason*, provided you mean by that term the reason or nature of things: using the term in this sense, a statement contrary to reason, is, without controversy, false. But the contrariety must be real; and, in order to know this, the nature of things must be perfectly understood, or the objection cannot be consistently brought. Seeing that the wisest men are only partially acquainted with some of the phenomena around them, and of the reason or nature of things they confessedly know but little, it must be very great presumption to affirm of any truth contained in an authenticated revelation, that it is absurd, or contrary to reason.

But the objector uses the word *reason*, meaning by it the human understanding; and thus sets up the imperfect judgment of man as the standard by which to measure the reasonable-

ness of the divine communications. To this we object. Every consideration which goes to prove the necessity of a revelation, with equal force and clearness convicts the feeble, disordered reason of man, of entire incompetency to understand all the grounds and connections of very many great truths which God has presented as the objects of his faith. As facts and doctrines, which could never be developed by any process of rational investigation, they have been revealed authoritatively ; while the reason or nature of things on which they are founded is either in part or wholly hidden. Why this is so, it is useless to inquire : it may be because the entire process would altogether transcend our faculties, or there may be some other cause.

Let it then be distinctly kept in mind, that the orthodox Christian receives no truth, not even the sublimest mysteries of our religion, on anything short of rational evidence, and that, too, of the clearest and most demonstrative kind. Whatever is proved to be taught in the Scriptures, by faithfully applying the acknowledged principles of interpretation, must be true. It has the signature of Him who cannot lie ; and unbelief is as irrational as it is impious.

Another and similar objection urged against the orthodox belief is, that doctrines are held which contradict other doctrines of revelation, and, therefore, cannot be true.

The answer is much the same as that above. We readily admit, that when any doctrine is plainly taught in Scripture, no man has a right to infer, or deduce from other passages, a doctrine contrary to this. For instance, the divine unity being plainly asserted, there cannot be more Gods than one; and all passages which speak of the plurality of persons in the Godhead, must be interpreted so as to agree with the truth, that there is one only living and true God.

The principle contained in the objection is true, and the fallacy lies in applying it improperly. The application of this rule is very limited, as any one can see, especially if the reference is to the distinguishing truths of revealed religion. In order to discover a contradiction between two propositions they must be compared, and both must be perfectly understood by him who attempts the comparison, or he cannot intelligently assert any real contrariety. Inasmuch as we do not, and cannot, understand the nature or properties of a spirit,

we are not competent to say what is, or what is not, possible as to the manner of such existence.

We will have occasion to refer to this subject again; and now proceed to explain some of the terms employed in the following discussion.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEFINITIONS.

It is of great importance in all controversies that the principal terms, or those which cover the points in dispute, be defined with all possible clearness. So long as there is any misapprehension or uncertainty in the mind of the reader, as to the meaning which is attached to such terms, the argument must be to him unsatisfactory and inconclusive.

When we assert our belief in a trinity of divine persons in the unity of the Godhead, the meaning attached to the terms, it seems, is not always distinctly understood.

By the term "persons," as used in orthodox confessions of faith, we do not mean *separate* existences, as when speaking of the different persons who compose an assembly. This is, *perhaps*, the most common, but is not the

established theological, use of the word. It is admitted that to assert, in this sense, a trinity of persons, each invested with divine attributes, would imply a plurality of Gods.

Nor, on the other hand, is the term used by us in so qualified and restricted a sense as to indicate only the different modes of the divine manifestations, or the several offices in which God acts. God is one. The manner of his existence is, of necessity, transcendent, and, to us, altogether incomprehensible, though we may most rationally and confidently believe whatever fact he is pleased to reveal touching himself. He has made himself known under the distinct characters of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The distinctions thus indicated are real and personal. To each, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, individual, personal acts, are ascribed, and each is frequently spoken of both subjectively and objectively, and otherwise invested with all the distinctive attributes or properties of personality.

By persons of the trinity we mean intelligent agents, severally and equally possessed of divine attributes, yet in nature or essence so mysteriously united as to constitute but one being. If it be objected, that the idea of personality implies not only distinct, but separate

existence, it would be enough to reply, that this assertion is wholly without proof. Personality, when predicated of men, is associated with the notion of their separate existence ; but this does not enter into the original idea of personality any more than the various other properties of the beings contemplated. That each of the distinct persons among men has an identity separate from all others, is a real, and perhaps necessary, condition of their being ; but surely, for aught that we can know to the contrary, in the higher modes of intellectual life, distinct persons may exist inseparably in one undivided and indivisible essence. If such truth were presented to us for the first time, it would be contrary to our experience, and could be supported by no analogies, but it certainly would be encumbered with no philosophical difficulties. It is absurd to affirm that it is contrary to the nature of things, when it is admitted that the subject, of which this peculiarity is predicated, is but imperfectly known.

Inasmuch, then, as God reveals himself under the distinct characters and appellations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we apply the term person to each of these respectively, because personal acts are, on divine authority, ascribed *to each* ; and the word sufficiently expresses what

would otherwise require an inconvenient circumlocution.

Trinity, or triunity, (from *tres* and *unus*, or *unitas*,) expresses the union of these three persons of the divine nature in one glorious and incomprehensible Being, whom alone we worship as God over all.

By "Godhead" we mean the divine essence or nature—the being as distinguished from the particular attributes or perfections of God.

Having sufficiently prepared the way, we are now ready to hear the testimony which the Scriptures furnish on subjects of the most deep and abiding interest to every human being.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRINITY.

THE manner of the divine existence is not a subject of inquiry any further than it is revealed in the Bible, and we shall be wholly confined to evidence drawn from this source. The proof may be direct and positive, or indirect and circumstantial, or both—it may be found in one passage or in many: but in whatever particular form the evidence may be found, we are bound to regard it; and whatever *fact* it establishes we

must believe, however deep the mystery it seems to involve.

It would require a volume to spread out all the evidence, so abundantly furnished by the Scriptures, in favor of the doctrine of the trinity; and having but a few pages to devote to this branch of the subject, it will be necessary to notice the passages in which the doctrine is taught by classes, referring only to a few of each class.

It were a most reasonable presumption that all important truths connected with man's salvation, besides being plainly and directly announced, would be indicated more or less distinctly in various other passages.

In all systems of ethics or philosophy there are certain leading hypotheses, which, whether they have or have not been formally stated, are often adumbrated without any apparent intention. They give their impress to all parts of the system, and produce peculiarities of phraseology, or modes of expression, which would otherwise be unaccountable. For the same reason, the Bible, being a perfect and coherent system of truths concerning God, man, and their relations to each other; if its divine Author in making himself known reveals a plurality of *persons* in one undivided nature or essence, this

is certainly a remarkable peculiarity, and we may expect frequent indications of it: a truth so unlike anything before familiar to man must give rise to some peculiarities of expression.

Presumptive evidence of this kind is very abundant, and those accustomed to read with close observation have doubtless felt its force. If the doctrine of the trinity is not taught in the Old Testament, what rational account can be given of the fact, well known to every scholar, that in the original the name of the Supreme Being is often found in the plural number joined with a singular verb? The most labored attempts to prove this an idiom of the language have been tried in vain. The thing may be asserted, and often has been; but the proof is wanting. Though this plural form of the noun (*Elohim*) has not been preserved in the translation, those who do not read Hebrew will find the same thing indicated in English by the use of plural pronouns. Take a few examples:—"And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, and in *our* likeness." "And the Lord God said, Man is become like *one* of *us*, to know good and evil." "Who will go for *us*, and whom shall *we* send?" "Let *us* go down and confound their language."

Admitting that the Son and the Spirit in union with the Father are the *Elohim*, or God,

who speaks, such a mode of expression is perfectly natural, and easy to be understood; but on the contrary hypothesis, it is incapable of any rational explanation. The attempt, it is true, has been made, but with what wisdom and success the reader must judge. After much profitless labor, two methods of reconciling these plural forms with the Unitarian theory have been proposed. The first suggests that God may, by speaking thus, intend to associate with him the higher orders of angels as his *council*; or, as the Jews express it, "his house of judgment." The obvious and fatal objection to this is, that angels were not associated with Jehovah in the work of creation, nor was man made in the image of angels, but "in the image of God created he them." "Who hath been his counselor?" &c.

2. They next say that God employs what sometimes called the style of royalty; as king, governors, and other public functionaries, &c. the plural pronouns when speaking of themselves in the singular. This has been thought by many the most plausible way of evading the difficulty. If this "style of royalty" had any existence in the days of Moses the suggestion might have some show of reason in it; but very unfortunately for those who rely on it, no such custom

prevailed. Royal personages did not then employ the plural forms, such as have been quoted, when speaking of themselves alone. And for this reason the doctrine of the trinity must have been more clearly indicated to the ancient Hebrews by these peculiar forms of speech, than it is to those, whether Jew or Gentile, to whose ears they have become somewhat familiar.

But even if this style of speaking had been in use from the days of Moses, is it not strangely absurd to suppose that God would borrow his manner of communication from a king, and that too before man was created on the earth? Besides, if this were even possible, yet the cases will not agree. For though a king may say "us," and "we," there is now no figure of speech that will warrant any person to say "one of us" when speaking of himself.

The manifest failure of Unitarians to furnish anything like a reasonable explanation of these texts, with all the labor and learning employed for the purpose, greatly increases the strength of their testimony.

Passing by many others, there is a remarkable text found in Deut. vi, 4: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord." This strongly asserts the divine unity; but in the Hebrew "*Elohim*" is used, thus clearly revealing plurality

in some respect as belonging to the Godhead; while in some other respect, consistent with this, unity is positively asserted. Much time has been spent, and extraordinary pains taken, in unsuccessful attempts to silence the testimony of this passage. But when all is done, they cannot, by any arts of criticism which have been plied, take the idea of plurality from this name ascribed to Jehovah, who in nature or essence is "one Lord." If this plurality has not respect to persons, I know not how it can be predicated of him who is God alone.

Instances where the plural number of both the noun and pronouns are applied to God might be multiplied, if necessary. Let it be remembered that they occur thus frequently in writings which forbid and severely threaten all kinds of idolatry; and assert, in the strongest possible way, the sovereignty of the one living and true God, who will not give his glory to another; and the evidence they furnish on the point is very conclusive. While I do not, by any means, rest the argument principally on these passages, they are quoted with the strong conviction that they are incapable of any other rational interpretation than that which has generally been given them by orthodox divines. *If the doctrine of the trinity is the doctrine of*

the Bible, they are just what might have been expected; if it is not, they are anomalies which cannot be accounted for.

One other passage, of a little different form, must be given before we leave this feature of the subject. It is found in Isaiah vi, 3. The seraphims, it is said, "cried one to another, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts," &c. It is readily admitted that the simple fact of trine adoration would of itself prove nothing; but Unitarians cannot escape the testimony of this text, as they attempt to do, under the cover of that position. That circumstance by itself might be quite unworthy of our notice; yet, when taken in connection with other things, it may be of more importance than is at first supposed. Mr. Watson remarks on this, in substance, as follows: "The scene of the vision is in the temple—the inner part of which is called the holy of holies," or the holy place of the Holy Ones, who are here celebrated by the seraphs, that veiled their faces before them. This distinct act of trine adoration, which has so often been supposed to mark a plurality of persons as the object of it, is answered by a voice from that excellent glory, which so overwhelmed the mind of the prophet when he was favored with the vision, in the same language of plurality in which

the doxology of the seraphs is expressed: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

But this is not the only evidence that the *Holy Ones*, who were addressed, each by his appropriate and equal designation of *holy*, were the three divine persons in the Godhead.

The being addressed is "*the Lord of hosts*:" this all acknowledge to include the Father. But the inspired evangelist, (John xii, 41,) when referring directly to this transaction, observes: "These things said Esaias when he saw his (Christ's) glory, and spake of him." In this vision, therefore, we have the presence of the Son also, whose glory the prophet beheld. Acts xxviii, 25, determines that there was yet another divine person who received the adoration of the seraphim: "Well spake the *Holy Ghost* by Esaias, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing, ye shall hear and not understand; seeing, ye shall not perceive," &c. The passage is quoted from Isaiah by the apostle Paul, who declares it to have been spoken by the Holy Ghost; while Isaiah, as we have seen, declares that the words were spoken on the very same occasion by "*the Lord of hosts*."

Now let all these circumstances be put together—the place, the holy place of the Holy Ones; the repetition of the homage *three* times,

“Holy, holy, holy ;” the one Jehovah, or Lord of hosts, to whom it was addressed ; the plural pronoun used by this one Jehovah, “*us* ;” the positive declaration of the inspired evangelist, that on this occasion Isaiah saw the glory of *Christ* ; the testimony of Paul, that the Lord of hosts, who spake by the prophet, was the Holy Ghost—and the conclusion will not appear to be without most powerful authority, both circumstantial and declaratory, that the adoration, “Holy, holy, holy,” referred to the divine Three, united in one nature or essence, as “the Lord of hosts.”

The argument might be confirmed by the authority of other similar passages, but it is not necessary. To those who have an ear to hear, and reverently receive the words of truth, a few apposite texts are as good as a thousand.

The same truth is taught in a great many places in the New Testament, some of which we shall have occasion to notice when speaking of the divinity of Christ. But two or three texts will be selected now, and they need but little comment.

The form of the apostolic benediction shows that they believed in a trinity of persons as the object of their worship :—“The grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and the love of God, and

the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." 2 Cor. xiii, 14.

The form of baptism, which Christ instructed his ministers to use, proves the same doctrine :—"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. xxviii, 19.

I will only add to these the celebrated passage from 1 John v, 7, which has stood the test of the severest criticism. Its genuineness was once matter of doubt, and some authorities are found against it in the ranks of the orthodox; but subsequent investigations have shown that it is much more easy to account satisfactorily for its absence from some of the versions, than to supply what is manifestly a hiatus or defect in the sense of the passage without it. The sense is incomplete without it, and the context will always strongly vindicate the claims of the disputed clause to be received as a part of God's holy word. Besides, it is quoted by both Cyprian and Tertullian; while St. Jerome, who certainly had a better opportunity of deciding on the true merits of the case than we can have at this distance of time, tells us plainly that it was in the more ancient copies, but was adulterated, mistranslated, and omitted, by heretics, on purpose to evade the doctrine of the trinity.

But what do Unitarians gain by rejecting this passage, as long as Christ himself asserts the very same thing? Having cast out the servant, will they also lay violent hands on the Master?

The three witnesses are spoken of after this manner:—"I am one that bear witness of myself." "The Father that sent me beareth witness of me." "It is the Spirit that beareth witness." What need have we of any further testimony? "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." Unitarians must bring altogether stronger arguments against the genuineness of the text than they yet have produced, or unsophisticated Christians will still confidently join the beloved disciple in declaring: "*There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.*"

CHAPTER VI.

THE ESSENTIAL DIVINITY OR GODHEAD OF
JESUS CHRIST.

THE passages which have been produced in proof of the doctrine of the trinity were quoted only as preparatory to the more direct evidence on which we rely to establish the supreme divinity of the Son, or second named of the three divine persons to whom equal honors are ascribed, and homage paid, by the church on earth and in heaven. In places quite too numerous to be cited, two other divine persons are mentioned, sometimes in connection, and sometimes separately, as associated with God the Father in works of infinite power and majesty; and as equally with him possessed of those glorious and incommunicable perfections of nature and character, which can never, with any propriety, be ascribed to creatures, however exalted their rank. If but few passages of this kind were to be found, there might be some apology for the attempts that are made to evade their testimony; but they are everywhere abundant, and have placed around the great truth they so plainly assert bulwarks of defense,

which remain impregnable to all the assaults of ingenious and cunning men.

The knowledge of Christ is essential to true religion. He is the precious Corner-stone, on whom all our hopes are staid; and "other foundation can no man lay." Faith being the condition of salvation through his merits, it is not only important, but necessary, that our views of his character be in accordance with the truth; otherwise, our faith must be vain, and sin remain unpardoned. "He that believeth not is condemned already:" continuing in unbelief he shall not see life; "but the wrath of God abideth on him."

The alarming practical influence of the prevailing errors on this subject will be noticed hereafter. We shall now attend to the evidence of Christ's real divinity, presenting the several varieties of proof separately, and comparing scripture with scripture.

Let it be kept in mind that God, whose word we are about to examine, forbids idolatry, and reveals his wrath against all who transfer to a creature the honor due to him alone. It cannot be possible, then, that *he* has authorized the use of names and descriptive titles, applied to an inferior being, which have been especially

appropriated as his own. He to whom such names are given must be God, or the Bible is strangely inconsistent with itself.

Isaiah viii, 13, 14: "Sanctify the *Lord of hosts himself*, and let *him* be your fear, and let him be your dread: and he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a *stone of stumbling* and *rock of offense* to both houses of *Israel*."

Compare this with 1 Peter ii, 7, 8: "The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a *stone of stumbling* and *rock of offense*."

The stone of stumbling and rock of offense, as the former text affirms, is, *the Lord of hosts himself*; a name which must belong to the supreme God, and to him only.

But this very stone of stumbling, which the *builders refused*, is no other than *Christ*, to whom Peter applies the prophecy: therefore, *Christ is the Lord of hosts himself*, and as such we are commanded to sanctify him in our hearts. This conclusion may indeed be *denied*, and so may the whole Bible; but the argument, which is so plain that a child can understand it, cannot be answered.

II. CHRIST IS CALLED JEHOVAH.

It is admitted by most intelligent Unitarians that this is an appellation peculiar to the one

infinite and eternal God. Should any one be disposed to deny that Jehovah is a peculiar and incommunicable name of the Most High, I refer him to the following texts. I quote them as they are found in the original, reminding the reader, that when the word Lord in our English Bibles is printed in capitals, the Hebrew is Jehovah.

Exod. xxxiv, 6. When God revealed himself to Moses, he passed by and proclaimed himself the "Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious." Amos v, 8: "Jehovah is his name." Neh. ix, 6: "Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone." Psalm lxxxiii, 18: "Whose name alone is Jehovah." Isaiah xlii, 8: "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to graven images." These are abundantly sufficient to show that this name Jehovah belongs exclusively to the Supreme Being; he does not possess it in common with any other.

Now if it can be shown that this name is, in the Scriptures, given to Christ the Messiah, it will be a very strong assertion of his real divinity.

The following facts are worthy of some attention before particular texts are introduced.

1. The patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations were conducted immediately by a supereminent

being, styled the Messenger of the Covenant, the Angel of the Lord, and Jehovah. This Jehovah was often visibly present, conversed with his chosen servants, and with a mighty arm wrought deliverances for them: he frequently and variously asserted his claim to divine honors, and received homage or worship due to God alone.

The proof that the person making these appearances was truly a *divine person*, is very copious; but quotations shall not be needlessly multiplied. It is enough for the present argument to show that he certainly received this one peculiar name of God, Jehovah.

When the Angel of the Lord found Hagar in the wilderness, "she called the name of *Jehovah* that spake to her, Thou God seest me." Gen. xvi, 13. On the Plains of Mamre "Abraham stood before Jehovah," whom he also calls "the Judge of all the earth." Jacob says: "Surely the Lord (*Jehovah*) is in this place." The Jewish worship shows that sacrifices were offered and sin confessed to him; that he pardoned sin; and in their inspired songs was ever celebrated as the "*Jehovah*, God of their fathers."

2. *This divine person was not God the Father.*
He is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible,

whom no man hath seen nor can see. Neither can any one suppose that this Angel or Messenger of God, who is called Jehovah, was, in *all respects*, the same as God himself: that he did possess the same attributes—the same nature—there is no doubt. The titles and works ascribed to him prove it. But he had certainly distinct personality, and a different office, for he was sent of the Father.

3. We next present plain and positive evidence that this same person, thus appearing, was the Messiah, or Christ.

John distinctly tells us, that the prophet “saw his glory, and spake of him.” Compare John xii, 41, with Isaiah vi, 5: “Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” Thus it appears that this King, or Jehovah of hosts, and Christ, are one.

Malachi iii, 1, contains a prophetic promise of the coming Saviour in these words: “The Lord (Jehovah) whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in.” That this promise was fulfilled in Christ cannot be denied. When he came, as we learn from the evangelist, he asserted his rightful ownership of the temple, which had been dedicated to his worship, and sharply rebuked the impiety of those who

had profaned his house with their merchandise. The testimony on this point might be greatly extended ; but what has already been presented is quite sufficient to establish the fact, that when God is represented as appearing, conversing, &c., the Lord Jesus Christ is always intended. He, and not the Father, appeared to men as the object of their senses. It was he that made covenant with the Father ; that chose the seed of Abraham ; that brought the children of Israel from the land of Egypt ; that led them through the wilderness, and with many mighty signs and wonders put them in possession of the promised land. He was again and again called “the Angel of the Covenant”—“Angel of the Lord”—“the God of Jacob”—“Jehovah, God of Abraham.” These names are given to him, not in solitary instances, and in an accommodated sense ; they are the common appellations by which this glorious Person is designated.

In the third chapter of Genesis, where he is represented as conversing with our first parents, he is styled the Lord, or Jehovah God, at least eight times.

In the thirteenth of Judges he is ten times called the Angel of the Lord, or the Angel Jehovah. These facts are not always noticed *by the reader*. This august title belonging also

to the Father, it is sometimes supposed that *he* is intended, when more attention to the connection would show clearly that the reference must be to the Son.

Of the Father it is said, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." He has never assumed a visible form. In his person, "no man hath seen God at any time; but the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, *he* hath declared him." From the facts and the testimony referred to above, it is fully established that Jesus is repeatedly in the Old Testament called Jehovah; a name importing divinity in the highest sense.

This argument, in itself strong and convincing, receives additional confirmation in the New Testament. All know that, in the writings of the evangelists and apostles, Christ is called "the Lord" with great frequency. Indeed, this is with them his common appellation.

Now if it can be shown that they used the word *Κύριος*, translated Lord, as synonymous with the name Jehovah, found in the Old Testament, then we have very many instances in which they, inspired by the Holy Ghost, called Jesus Jehovah; a name which is confessedly applicable to God alone. A very little attention to the subject will satisfy any scholar that

the seventy who translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, use the word *Kύριος* to express the same glorious perfections which the Hebrews expressed by the name Jehovah. So they repeatedly render the word; and that they were skillful philologists cannot be questioned. Whatever other meanings may sometimes be attached to this word, it is certain that they used it as stated above, no doubt regarding it as the most appropriate word in the Greek language by which to translate Jehovah. Thus the *religious* meaning of the word *Kύριος* is established; and as both Christ and his apostles must have been familiar with the Septuagint, and sometimes quote from it, it would be very unreasonable to suppose that they would employ a term thus appropriated in a sense materially different, without giving notice of the fact.

But there is further evidence on this point. Passages are transferred from the Old to the New Testament, in which the writers, as directed by the Holy Ghost, substitute *Kύριος* for Jehovah. In Joel ii, 32, the literal translation is, *Whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah, shall be saved*—which passage is quoted by Paul, Rom. x, 13, in these words: "*Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord,*

(τοῦ Κυρίου,) shall be saved." The evangelist Matthew (iii, 3) applies to Christ the well-known prophecy of Isaiah lx, 3: "For this is He that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight." The other evangelists make the same application of it, representing John as the herald of their Lord, whom the prophet calls Jehovah. Thus is it evident, that they used the term Κύριος in the highest possible sense, and as asserting the supreme divinity of him to whom they apply it. Take one other passage, Luke i, 16, 17. Speaking of John as the forerunner of Christ, the evangelist says: "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the *Lord their God*, and he shall go before *him* in the spirit and power of Elias." Here again the divine Saviour is proclaimed to the Jews as the "*Lord their God*," whose coming was proclaimed, and whose way his servant came to prepare before him. We might add other texts of like character; but these are quite sufficient to show that though the inspired writers, like ourselves, may sometimes use the word Lord in a lower sense, yet its principal and only religious use with them is, to express *divinity in the highest sense*. But if there

could be any doubt as to the meaning of the word itself, it is certainly removed by the adjuncts, or qualifying phrases, which are connected with it. The inspired men, as if on purpose to silence the cavils of Unitarians and Arians of every class, employ the word Lord in such connections, and join with it such other terms, as necessarily imply supreme divinity. He is "the Lord of hosts"—"the Lord God"—"Lord of all"—"Lord of lords, and King of kings"—"Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but *thou* art the *same*, and thy years shall not fail."

From such testimonies the conclusion is irresistible, that the eternal, immutable God, whose memorial is Jehovah, and Jesus the Christ, to whom the same incommunicable name is given, are one God, the two persons having the same ineffably glorious nature or substance.

Again, the name, "Son of God," is applied to Christ in such a way as fully to assert his essential equality with the Father. It will be *nothing* to the purpose to alledge that angels

and men are sometimes, in an 'accommodated sense, called sons of God. The question is not what may the word mean when otherwise appropriated, but what does it mean when applied to Christ, the Messiah?

John x, 27, 30: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man can pluck them out of my Father's hand.—I and my Father are one." I may refer to this again; but quote it now to show that, in calling God his Father, our Lord claimed equality with God. So the Jews understood him. They, like some at the present time, supposed him to be a mere man, and were enraged because he arrogated to himself supreme divinity. Hence they stoned him for blasphemy; and when a reason for their violence was asked, they answer, "Because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." But it is said "he intended no such thing, and the Jews greatly mistook his meaning." However necessary this assertion may be to support the Unitarian hypothesis, it has not the least foundation in truth. They certainly did not misunderstand him, or, as an honest teacher, he would have corrected their error. He saw their imminent peril, that they were about to bring endless ruin on themselves, *and turn many others aside, by rejecting him*

and his doctrine. His personal safety was also in danger, and all because the language he had employed made an erroneous impression on the minds of those who heard him, yet no explanation is given. The *truth* had offended them; and he could not, to appease their anger, abate one tithing from the claim to equality with the Father which had been so clearly asserted.

In the same sense in which Christ claimed God for his Father, his disciples honored him as the Son of God. Peter knew very well that his Master, in asserting that relation, claimed that "he and the Father are one;" thus fully authorizing the inference of the Jews, which he also tacitly admitted, that the Son of God, being of one and the same nature, must be essentially equal to the Father: yet he very promptly confesses his faith, saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus indorses this acknowledgment of his real divinity or Godhead, by replying, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but the will of my Father which is in heaven."

John v, 23, Christ himself declares, "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the *Son*, *honoreth* not the Father which sent him."

To honor God as his character and our relations to him demand, is certainly to reverence and worship him supremely. This all must admit; and the text just quoted teaches that all men should honor the Son, "even as they honor the Father." If the Father is worthy of supreme homage and adoration, the Son is equally so. Thus it is seen that the Redeemer is the Son of God in a peculiar and appropriated sense; that this title denotes his divinity, and distinguishes him from every other person in the universe. But, to present the matter in a still stronger light, the inspired writers connect with this peculiar title, "Son of God," adjuncts, or qualifying words and phrases, which forbid the supposition that he to whom they apply it is less than God. He is called the "*only-begotten Son of God*"—*his own Son*; and, by way of eminence, "*the Son of the Father*"—"his beloved Son." For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" He is "the only-begotten Son *which is in the bosom of the Father.*" He alone knows the Father. None can reveal or make him known but the Son. He is in such a sense the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of

his person, that he who hath seen the Son hath seen the Father. I need not multiply references. He is called the Son of God more than one hundred times in the New Testament. This appellation is thus frequently given him in communications addressed, on divine authority, to the Jews, who certainly understood it to imply divinity in the highest sense. When, to remove their objections to the miracle of healing he had wrought, Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" "they sought the more to kill him, because he said God was his Father—*making himself equal with God.*" When he told them plainly, "*I am the Son of God,*" they accuse him of blasphemy; because, say they, "thou, being a man, makest thyself God." When Jesus was arraigned before their council, the high priest charged him, with the solemnity of an oath, saying, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God;" and when Jesus answers in the affirmative, they at once charge him with blasphemy, and pronounce him worthy of death for asserting this claim. And before Pilate they urge this accusation against him: "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, *because he made himself the Son of God.*"

From these and other passages it is plain that the Jews did affix the idea of divinity to the title, "Son of God," and considered it as expressing a character infinitely above that which a mere creature might arrogate to himself.

With this fact before us, how dare any one assert that when the evangelists, apostles, and Christ himself, use this title, *they* mean no such thing—that though the *Jews* supposed that name implied divinity, *they* did not intend to convey this idea ? This is a flagrant violation of a plain principle of interpretation, which all reasonable men must admit. The principle or rule is in substance, and briefly this : When the inspired writers employ appropriated words to which a definite meaning had been attached, they must be supposed to mean and teach the same thing which others expressed by the same words. The application is easy. Christ, who claimed to be the Son of God ; and his servants, who, speaking by the Holy Ghost, called him the Son of God ; knew that the people whom they addressed understood that title to import divinity in the highest sense, and they therefore must have intended to assert the divinity or Godhead of Christ. If they did *not* intend this, but on the contrary believed in the inferiority of the Son, then their language was strangely

calculated to deceive ; and convicts them, or rather the Spirit which moved them, of either ignorance or perverseness. Those who are not prepared to charge God thus foolishly, and who find their theory at variance with what was, at the time they were uttered, the commonly received meaning of the passages referred to, would do well to review their theology, and abandon what is so irreconcilably opposed to the plain testimony of the Scriptures.

The meaning of this peculiar name, so often given to our Redeemer, is, if possible, made yet more certain, by the fact, that men were required to put their trust in him as the Son of God, and believe in that *as his name* was an essential article of the Christian faith. The multitude, it is true, refused him this honor : they supposed him to be John the Baptist risen again ; Elias, or one of the prophets—a mere creature, and not God, equal and one with the Father. But the confession of Peter was the common faith of the disciples : “ *We* believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” This, too, was the eunuch’s faith, required in order to his being baptized. In this sense, “ he that hath,” or believeth, “ the Son, hath life ; and he that hath not the Son shall *not see life*, but the wrath of God abideth on

him." "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God;" and the same beloved disciple, who testifies these things, declares, "These things have I written unto you *that believe on the name of the Son of God*, that ye may know ye have eternal life, and *that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*"

Here the distinguishing faith of the apostolic church is recognized, and believers are encouraged to continue therein, by the assurance that they have eternal life in Him. Blessed indeed are all they that put their trust in Him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST PROVED FROM OTHER TITLES GIVEN TO HIM.

I NOW proceed to show that the very name, God, is repeatedly, and without any restriction or qualification, given to Christ, and that, therefore, he is in the highest sense divine. This again, it must be admitted, is the peculiar name of the eternal and infinite Creator—a name which he "will not give to another," any more than he will share his glory with the graven images. It does not weaken the argument in

the least, that the same word is sometimes, in the plural number, and in restricted sense, applied to heathen gods. In the singular, and connected as it is in the passages about to be produced, it is always the appropriate name of the one living and true God.

Isaiah ix, 6 : " For unto us a child is born, a Son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God." Now if, as the passage declares, and by the special direction of *Him* who spake to our fathers by the prophets, Jesus is called " The mighty God ;" he must have been equal to and one with the Father, or God has given his name and glory to another. *Men* may err in the application of names and descriptive titles ; but we may rest assured that the prophet, moved by the Holy Ghost, could never call a mere creature, however exalted, " The mighty God."

Luke i, 16, 17. Referring to John the Baptist, it is said, " Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and shall go before *him* in the spirit and power of Elias." All admit that John was the forerunner or predecessor of Christ—that he went before *him* in *the spirit and power of Elias*—and consequently

Jesus is here spoken of as "*the Lord their God*," to whom the hearts of the children of Israel were turned. So Thomas, when relieved from all doubt as to his real character, exclaims with adoring reverence, "My Lord and my God!" and, in reply, the Saviour shows his approbation of the faith thus fervently confessed, while he mildly reproves the previous unbelief of Thomas.

John i, 1-14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Language could not be more plain and pertinent than this; and while He thus dwelt among us his peculiar and descriptive name was, by divine appointment, "Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." The apostle bears witness to the same great truth, with the same studied perspicuity of language. 2 Tim. iii, 16: "God was manifest in the flesh." I shall not delay to collate other passages; to do so would be wholly superfluous, and on those now before us I only observe, that if there is any certainty of meaning or import in human language, these inspired men certainly pronounce Christ to be

God. But how will the Unitarian seek to evade the force of this positive testimony? He will admit that Christ is called "a God." In this way the Unitarian version renders the first verse of John's Gospel;—mark! "a god," that is, a little or inferior god. But for this impious perversion there is not the least authority. It is not a translation of the original justified by any sound principle of criticism, but a violent alteration expressly to protect the destructive error the passage was designed to confute. But the effort is useless; for the prophet rebukes the presumption, by proclaiming Him "The mighty God." He is (Titus iii, 13) "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" "the true God and eternal life;" even "God over all and blessed for evermore." Of him the Father has said: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." What shocking blasphemy, by substituting the Unitarian meaning of the term God when applied to Christ, would be expressed in the above and similar passages! They would read something as follows: "Thy throne, O 'a god,' is for ever and ever"—"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the (inferior or little) god, even our Saviour," &c.

After his fruitless endeavor to evade the

force of the most positive and unambiguous testimony, it is no uncommon thing for the Unitarian to ask, with apparent honesty, "Why (if Christ was really God) was not that fact stated more plainly?" I answer, That would be impossible. Language cannot state the proposition with more clearness. He is not only declared to be God, but that name was given to him under circumstances, and joined with other titles, which fully demonstrate that it was used in its highest sense of proper divinity. The Holy Ghost, by which his servants spoke, proclaims *him*, "the great God," "the mighty and everlasting God," "the true God, and Author of eternal life;" yea, "God over all and blessed for evermore."

Reader, beware of those who, through craftiness and vain philosophy, wrest these, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction. It is a fearful thing to impeach God's witnesses, or mutilate the testimony they have given concerning his Son; such despisers will, at the last day, wonder and perish, because God hath wrought a work which they "will in no-wise believe, even though he himself declare it unto them."

CHAPTER VIII.

\\ CHRIST POSSESSED ALL THE ESSENTIAL PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

ALL we know, or can know, of the infinite and invisible God, is from the character, perfections, and attributes, under which he has been pleased to reveal himself. Of his essence nothing can be known by us now, save that he is a spirit; and possibly our crude ideas of spirit scarcely approximate the reality. But on the attributes and glorious perfections of our Creator, as they are revealed in his word, we can meditate with adoring wonder. Through these we know Him, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Some of the perfections of the Godhead are necessarily peculiar to the Supreme Being—they can belong to no other. The most exalted and glorious creature must fall infinitely short of them. The argument under this head of our subject is simple, as in the former cases. A child, if attentive, can understand it. It may be very briefly stated as follows: The perfections of nature which belong to God alone, which he neither can nor will share with another, are in the Scriptures ascribed to Christ the Messiah. *He therefore must be God, though distinct from*

the Father in *person*, *offices*, and *work*, as man's Redeemer, yet *one* with him in *nature* or *essence*.

"It would be easy to show that Christ possessed what are termed the moral attributes of God, to such a degree of absolute perfection as no creature can possess them; but it is still more to the purpose to show him possessed of those perfections peculiar to the Godhead, and incommunicable. The possession of any one of these, clearly attested, would settle his claim to divinity beyond all rational doubt. But the argument is cumulative, and the demonstration acquires an overwhelming force when he is proved to possess, not one alone, but all, the peculiar perfections of God, without any qualification or abatement whatever."

God is *eternal*—was before all things, even from everlasting—and there was no other eternal being; this all admit who profess to believe the Scriptures. But the same Scriptures, with equal plainness, assert the eternity of Christ. Heb. xiii, 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." This is a mode of expression manifestly including all duration—past, present, and future. Micah v, 2, reads, "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee

shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting." On this passage, I remark, that the Jews frequently speak of the infinite and eternal God as a being whose existence was from everlasting, and to no other being do they ever apply such language. But they understood this passage to refer to Christ, as it obviously does; and so the council of their chief priests and scribes applied it. Matt. xi, 6. Thus is Christ in his divine nature proved to be eternal, even *from everlasting*. As the self-existent Creator he was before all things, and as Messiah "his goings forth have been of old." In every age, from the foundation of the world, he has had his proper manifestations; for he was the author of salvation to believers, from the promise made to Adam in Paradise to the days of his humiliation, four thousand years after. Also in Heb. i, 10-12, we have a most solemn and sublime ascription at once of eternity and immutability to Christ: "And thou, Lord, *in the beginning* hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens also are the work of thy hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; *and* as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and *they shall be changed*: but thou art the same,

and thy years shall not fail." Rev. i, 17; xxii, 13: "Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.—I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." If these and similar passages do not assert the *eternity* of Christ, then language is certainly inadequate to convey the idea of eternity, and we are without proof that God the Father is eternal. If the greatness of the mystery authorize us to set aside the plainest testimony in the one case, it does in the other.

God is self-existent. He is the unoriginated source of life to all other beings. So Jesus, in his divine nature, was "the true God and eternal life." "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you *that eternal life* which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." 1 John i, 2. "The hour is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; for as the Father hath life in himself, even so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." No creature has life in himself; but all live, move, and have their being, in God. The Son having life in himself, is placed at an infinite remove from the highest

order of created beings; and it is no marvel that in immediate connection with this claim it is added, "that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

¶ *God is omnipotent.* He has power over all other beings. It is plain that there cannot be more than one omnipotent being: two things cannot be mutually, and in the same respect, greater each than the other. Power may be communicated to the creature, but a finite capacity necessarily limits the communication. Christ, as we have seen, is called, not only "the mighty God," but "the Almighty;" and to the Jews he said, "Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these doeth the Son likewise." Rev. i, 8; John v, 19.

¶ *God is omniscient.* This attribute also is peculiar to him—the glory of it he will not give to another: "I the Lord search the heart. I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." Jer. xvii, 10. "Thou, even thou *only*," says Solomon, "knowest the hearts of all the children of men." It may be difficult to fix limits to the knowledge of finite intelligences, but no one pretends that any but God *can*, with propriety, be said to know the heart of man. If then Christ had this knowledge, he

was certainly God: the proof that his knowledge was infinite is very clear. He often surprised his crafty enemies by showing his intimate knowledge of their hearts, convincing them that he perceived when they reasoned in themselves. But these manifestations of omniscience might possibly be evaded, if we had not positive testimony in support of his claim to this perfection of the divine nature.

The following passages are plain and pertinent. I give them without comment; they speak for themselves, and their testimony cannot be set aside.

John ii, 24, 25: "And Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man." xvi, 30: "Now are we sure that *thou knowest all things*, and needest not that any should ask thee." xxi, 17: "Lord, thou knowest *all things*; thou knowest that I love thee." Acts i, 24. Appealing to their ascended Lord, who had been declared the Son of God, with exceeding power and glory, by his resurrection from the dead, the apostles and brethren "prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which *knowest the hearts of all men*, show whether of these two thou hast chosen."

God is omnipresent. He fills heaven and

earth with his glory. This ubiquity, or power of being present in all places at the same time, cannot belong to any creature. Look at the following passages, which assert the omnipresence of our Lord Jesus Christ:—John iii, 13: “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man *which is in heaven.*” Here it is declared the Son of man was, at the very time he was conversing with them, in heaven—though he took upon him the seed of Abraham, his divine nature was not confined to the body.

To his disciples, commissioned to preach his gospel to every creature, he said, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world;” and multitudes of believers, assembled in different places at the same time, are assured that “wherever two or three are gathered together in his name he is in the midst of them.” All who truly believe in and love the divine Saviour must greatly desire his presence, and feel a sweet attraction to the place of prayer, because they know his promise to meet them will not be broken. When he reveals himself their sufficient Saviour, they often exclaim, like the disciples on the mount when they saw his glory, “Lord, it is good for us to be here.” *But whoever heard of a Unitarian, who has de-*

graded the Son of God to a mere creature expecting to meet the Saviour in the prayer meeting? If they even desired his presence, their theory would compel them to say, "Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring Christ down from above?" Their creature Christ has gone up on high, and cannot return again, nor do they expect his presence in their assemblies. If some of the sect who denominate themselves "Christians," do really enjoy the Saviour's presence, according to his gracious promise—as I am happy to believe they do—it only proves that their practical faith is evangelical, and plainly in opposition to their speculative theory of religious doctrine. Every time that, in answer to the prayer of faith, Christ reveals himself in the midst of them, he demonstrates the error of that feature in their theology which denies his omnipresence by disbelieving his supreme divinity. If he has changed their lost estate, and spoken to the heart those words of peace, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," they ought to acknowledge that he is God; knowing, as they must know, that "*none can forgive sins, but God only.*"

The smooth words and fair speeches of those who have advocated the Unitarian doctrine have deceived some honest, pious people.

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Their caricatures of the orthodox doctrine either wholly conceal the truth, or present it with distorted features, because seen through the fogs of a false philosophy ; and some, not having the means of detecting the imposition, have been led to adopt the terms appropriated to convey error, while still, in heart, they hold to some essential features of the true doctrine ; despite of the many and dangerous errors inculcated by their teachers, which necessarily tend to degrade the Redeemer of men to a mere creature, they still think of him with reverence, believe him able to save, and rest in the merit of his death. Building on this foundation, they may be saved, though their " wood, hay, and stubble," will be burned up, and they themselves suffer loss. May God speedily deliver such from the snare of the devil !

CHAPTER IX.

WORKS ARE ASCRIBED TO CHRIST WHICH NONE BUT GOD CAN PERFORM, AND WHICH, IT IS POSITIVELY DECLARED, GOD DID PERFORM.

THAT the work of creation, the production of being from nothing, requires almighty energy, and can be performed by none but God, must be admitted by all. The opening announcement of the divine revelations is: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And the same truth is variously reiterated throughout the Jewish Scriptures.

But of the Son, whose throne, as God, was for ever and ever, it is said: "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; the heavens also are the work of thy hands. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." "For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. i, 16, 17.

Nothing could be asserted more plainly than the Scriptures assert Jesus Christ to be the almighty Maker and Preserver of all things. He made not only the material universe, but "things in heaven as well as things on the earth." The invisible things—those various orders of pure spirits, denoted by the expressions "thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers"—owe their existence to him, and ever join in equal ascriptions of praise to Him that sits on the throne and the Lamb. If these records are true, he must be God, essentially equally with the Father.

Having made and preserved, he also controls, all things by the word of his power. Diseases are cured and devils cast out at his rebuke. The elements are subject to his will, and the astonished beholders are forced to exclaim, "What manner of person is this; for he commandeth even the winds and the water, and they obey him?" If he but say, "*I will, be thou clean,*" the leprosy is purged; and the same voice of authority breaks the sleep of death: thus demonstrating that "as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Well *might* he chide the unbelief of the Jews, by *referring to these mighty acts*: "The works that

I do they bear witness of me." And I wonder that any man can reject such testimony. Herein indeed is a marvelous thing, that ye know not who or from whence he is, and yet these peculiar works of the omnipotent God do show forth themselves in him!

In like manner his government of moral agents is asserted. He shows himself their absolute Sovereign, by authoritatively publishing the laws of his kingdom, and meting out appropriate rewards and punishments to the virtuous and the disobedient. He also claims the right to pardon the penitent and believing, inasmuch as sin is an offense committed against himself. When he said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," the Jews understood him to assert his equality with the Father, and for this they accuse him of blasphemy. In his reply to their accusation, he fully admits that he had exercised the prerogative of God, but denies that this was any assumption of right on his part. He appeals to his miracles as proof that he was indeed "God manifest in the flesh." Those mighty works he had undeniably performed in their midst, and by his own energy, were as much beyond the power of any mere creature as was the pardon of sin. And that they might know that he *had* "power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

he sick of the palsy, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." That no creature could of himself perform such a miracle was well known; and inasmuch as Christ performed it purposely to establish his claim to divine prerogative, which had been asserted by the forgiveness of sin, if his nature was not essentially divine, it would of course have been a preposterous absurdity for them to alledge that God interposed his power, and wrought the miracle to justify the presumption which they regarded as impious blasphemy. Hence his enemies, who sought an occasion against him, were confounded—"they could say nothing against it." But when the poor man arose immediately, and went forth before them all, pardoned and healed, "they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."

Again, the Scriptures plainly teach that God is judge—"that by him actions are weighed. "He will bring every work into the judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." But in the New Testament it is declared on the same authority, that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son:" and this arrangement, in *divine* economy, was especially designed *show that the Redeemer of men did not de*

the nature by uniting with it, in his own that of the seed of Abraham. In that body which "was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and in which he suffered the just for the unjust," he appears to judge the quick and dead. He is his designation, "that all men should honor him, even as they honor the Father."

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST IS A PROPER OBJECT OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

BEFORE attending to the proof on this point, it may be well to remark that man is repeatedly and positively forbidden to worship any other being save God alone; to do so is idolatry, whatever may be the nature or the powers of the object of adoration. To pay divine honors to an angel of light, surrounded with glorious manifestations of his exalted rank among created intelligences, would be no less sinful and offensive to God than similar homage paid to the stock or the stone; for there must be an infinite distance between the highest creature and the Creator of all things—a distance inconceivably greater *than that existing* between the feeblest child and

the loftiest spirit before the throne. Idolatry is creature worship, and its deep sinfulness consists, in part at least, in the fact that it robs God. If a man, or angel, or superangelic creature, usurps *His* place in the human heart, and is worshiped, God is thereby dishonored, and will avenge himself by suitably punishing the guilty. In all such cases the guilt of him who receives, or encourages, any act of worship addressed to himself, must greatly exceed that of the idolatrous worshiper: on his part the presumption is without apology, and can spring only from pride, selfishness, and arrogance; while the erring worshiper may be both humble and devout.

If Christ claimed and received religious worship, it will devolve on those who deny his essential divinity to show how a mere creature may with propriety arrogate to himself the right to be worshiped by his fellow-creatures: or, failing to do this, they will be obliged either to abandon this unauthorized theory, or endorse the accusation, brought by Jews and infidels, that Jesus was an ambitious impostor guilty of blasphemy, "because he being a man made himself equal with God."

Three particulars now claim our attention—the fact that he was worshiped; that he fully *recognized the propriety* of such worship; and

the fruitless attempts of Unitarians to reconcile this with their notions of his character.

The wise men, who were miraculously incited, and led from their country to seek the long promised Deliverer, say, "We have seen his star in the east, and are come to *worship* him. And when they saw the young child and his mother, they fell down and worshiped him."

"And there came a leper, and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." "There came a certain ruler, and worshiped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thy hand upon her and she shall live." "The woman of Canaan worshiped him." These familiar passages from Matthew's Gospel are sufficient to show that individuals repeatedly worshiped him. In chapter xiv he records an instance of associated worship:—

The disciples and others were in the midst of the sea, tossed by the waves, and struggling against the winds, which were contrary to them. About the fourth watch Jesus came to them walking on the sea. Thus by manifesting his unlimited power, in suspending at his pleasure the laws of gravitation, he showed forth his Godhead. He also enabled Peter to walk on the *water until he saw his faith failing, and then,*

by his own power, rescued him from the boisterous waves: "And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they which were in the ship came and *worshipped* him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." There is also repeated mention of worship paid to Christ after his resurrection. When he first made himself known to the women who were early at the sepulchre, "they came and held him by the feet, and *worshipped* him; and when the disciples saw him, they *worshipped* him also. Nor was this their habit only while he was with them; after he was parted from them, and taken up into heaven, they spent a season in *worshipping* him before they returned to Jerusalem. This was the universal custom of the apostolic church, as we are abundantly certified by history, both sacred and profane. Neither the scoffs nor the menaces of their enemies could prevent the early Christians from glorying in the cross, and paying divine honors to their crucified Redeemer. The first martyr, having prayed to him in behalf of his murderous persecutors, fell asleep in death, saying, "Lord Jesus, into thy hands I commend my spirit:" while the whole company of heaven are described in the Apocalypse as paying equal *honors* to Him that sits upon the throne and the *Lamb* for ever and ever. But it is needless to

insist on what is so very plain. The next question is, Did Christ receive and encourage this worship as due to him? That he was worshiped as God, cannot admit of a doubt, if we heed the testimony of inspired witnesses. Now, if he allowed and encouraged this, he either *was* or *was not* a proper object of such worship. If it is said he was, his Godhead is established; for it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." If he was not, then he is chargeable with presumption and blasphemy, which fully justify the Jewish council in condemning him to death. If unprepared for this impious conclusion, the former must be admitted, however ruinous to the theory of all who deny the Lord that bought them.

That Christ did recognize and receive, as due to him, the acts of worship so frequently addressed to him, is evident from the fact, that in no one instance did he either directly or indirectly intimate that there was the least impropriety in the conduct of those who knelt at his feet reverently to pray and to offer up their warmest thanks for the divine favor his hand bestowed; this silence itself sufficiently refutes the groundless assumption, that he did not regard himself as a proper object of worship, though his mistaken disciples and others did at times worship him.

If he was a mere creature, an ordinary regard for the glory of God, such as every good man must feel, would have called forth a prompt rebuke of their blind idolatry. Several instances are recorded in which, through mistaken views, religious honors were offered to the servants of God, when the divine power and glory were revealed through them; but in every case they were forward to oppose and forbid such acts as wrong, and dishonoring to God. When Cornelius bowed before Peter, he immediately bade him rise and stand upon his feet, saying, "I myself also am a man." When Paul and Barnabas heard that the people were about to worship them, because of the miracle they had wrought they were sorely grieved, and rent their clothes and ran into the midst, saying, "Sirs, why do ye these things. We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities." Even the angel, whose glorious appearance caused John to suppose him one of the divine persons, forbade the prostrate apostle to address any act of worship to him. "See," says he, "thou do it not: for I am of thy brethren the prophets and of them which keep the sayings of this book worship God." Such a course every one knows *was highly becoming* any creature, whatever his

nature and the services assigned him. Less than this, in the circumstances, would have been an offense against him who is God alone. Can any man believe that Christ, if a mere creature, would be guilty of thus invading the rights of Jehovah, by allowing men to worship him? Could he be thus regardless of the Father's honor: and, to exalt himself above measure, could he teach men to break the first, the great commandment, and yet claim our confidence as a teacher sent from God?

But we have more positive evidence still. His worshipers were kindly received; their petitions granted; and their faith, thus manifested, was highly commended. When Thomas, his doubts at length removed, with adoring reverence exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus, it is true, mildly chides his disciple; but for what? Was it that Thomas now worshiped him as his Lord and God? No, but for his previous unbelief. "Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." According to the Unitarian hypothesis, Thomas was before an unbeliever; but, recovered from that error, he immediately falls into idolatry. The last fault was certainly worse than the first. Before, he had too low views of the character and

kingdom of *Christ*; but now he robs and dishonors *God*, by confessing a mere creature to be his "Lord and God." Is it not strange, even to astonishment, that Christ, if he were less than God, should complain of unbelief, which was only in a limited degree disparaging to himself, and yet notice only with commendation faith and worship which did so dishonor God? These difficulties have greatly embarrassed those who deny the proper divinity of our Lord and Saviour, as is manifest by their fruitless attempt to evade them. These attempts now claim our attention.

Their first resort is to an accommodated meaning of the word worship. It is sometimes used, say they, as a mere term of civility. To this reply, that the sense of the passages quoted does not depend mainly on the use of the term worship but on words and circumstances connected with it, which sufficiently define its meaning. Granting that it is sometimes used in an accommodated sense, and simply by way of respectful salutation, it is easy to show that it is not so used in the texts to which reference has been made. For instance, it is highly improbable, and indeed absurd, to suppose that the "wise men, when they "worshiped him," intended only to salute the infant child—who, considered as the

son of Mary simply, was utterly unconscious of their prostrate attitude. Though sycophants and courtiers may bow down to their superiors, it surely is not the part of wise men to worship a helpless babe, in which they recognize only the lineaments of a frail and fallen creature.

So when the leper came kneeling down in his presence and worshiped him, saying, "*Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*;" Jesus replied as a God, "I will, be thou clean."

If more were needed to refute the cavils that have been raised about the meaning of this word, we have it in the fact, that in no age or nation have men been in the habit of showing respect for their superiors by bowing down to worship them *in their absence*. In all cases where the term worship is used in this inferior sense, it was performed in the presence of the person to whom it was addressed. But the apostles and all the apostolic church worshiped Christ after he ascended to heaven. When their Lord was taken from them, they did not even return to Jerusalem until they had with adoring wonder "worshiped him." It is probable that the worship then offered him was performed with clearer views of his supreme divinity than those in which they had previously participated. They had *received his final* instructions and the enlarged

commission to preach *his* gospel to every creature ; had seen the crowning miracle, which proclaimed him to be, "without controversy, God manifest in the flesh;" and they could hardly forget the prophecy which spoke of him as ascending up on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men. This they would remember, even though they had not, like the Psalmist, vision to see beyond the cloud, or an ear to hear the angels shout, as he returned to his throne, "Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." "Who is this King of glory?" A voice from the earth says, "He is a man and only a man, or at most a mere creature;" but David heard a voice from heaven in answer to that question. It was this: "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Reader, do you worship him as such? If not, the notes you raise would make jarring discord in heaven.

Another equally fruitless attempt has been made to evade the conclusion drawn from the fact that Christ was undeniably worshiped, by making a distinction between *supreme* and *subordinate* worship. The latter, it is said, may, *with propriety*, be paid to subordinate beings,

while the former is due to none but God. In order to make this distinction of any avail in support of the dogmas of Unitarianism, it is necessary to show that the worship offered to Christ, and approved by him, was *inferior* or *subordinate* worship. But this can never be done. The contrary is exceedingly plain. Supreme worship, it will be admitted, consists in thought, feeling, and action. He who would have us think of him as we think of the true God, would have us worship him supremely. That Christ would have men think of him as they ought to think of the true God is evident; because, as we have seen, he assumes the names, performs the works, and appropriates to himself all the glorious perfections, peculiar to God. When he challenges our adoration, he tells us plainly that he and the Father are one; that "he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Thus he speaks of himself—thus others, moved by the Spirit, speak of him as the true God; and it is greatly absurd to imagine that he would not be acknowledged and worshiped as such. Again, the feelings we are bound to cherish toward the Lord Jesus Christ imply supreme worship; and these feelings, if directed toward any object lower than the living God, would be idolatrous. For example: we are

bound to love God above all things—an affection so ardent, a duty so high, is due to none but him. Yet we certainly ought to love Jesus Christ above all things—to love him even more than our lives, which, of all things in the world, are dearest to us. In requiring this, he enjoins a duty which we do not, and cannot, owe to any but God. What would any one think to hear Isaiah, or Paul, or any other servant of the Lord, say, “He that forsaketh not wife and children, houses and lands, yea, and his own life also, for *my sake*, is not worthy of me?” Any construction or explanation of the passages referred to above, which conforms them to the Unitarian theory, if examined, will be found pressed with difficulties that are absolutely insurmountable. Their testimony cannot be silenced; and that the proof they furnish may be distinctly before the reader, I will present it in a compressed form, referring to what has already been said to sustain the positions that are taken.

1. Religious worship is an honor peculiar to God and ought not to be rendered to any creature. But such worship is, and, according to the Scriptures, ought to be, given to Jesus Christ: therefore Christ is not a creature, but God.

2. To worship any creature is idolatry. But

the apostles and primitive Christians worshiped Jesus Christ : therefore he is not a creature, or they were idolaters.

3. The divine Lawgiver strictly forbids idolatry, and pronounces a curse against those who are guilty of it. But the same Lawgiver commands even all the angels to worship our Lord Jesus Christ : therefore to worship Christ is not idolatry.

4. No creature can justly claim our supreme love. But Jesus Christ requires us to love him supremely : therefore he is not a creature, but God, whom we are commanded to love with all the soul, mind, and strength.

Other points in the argument, and more testimony to the fact now under consideration, might be presented, but it would be altogether unnecessary. I ask the candid reader who may have doubts respecting the supreme divinity of our Saviour, to consider this subject well.

If the claim of our *Emanuel* was not, as it is, clearly asserted by many and various other passages, to me it would seem most indubitably certain, that He, before whom, with the apostles, we are to bow down and worship ; who graciously forgives us when we sin ; on whom, in all the straits and difficulties of life, we are to call for aid ; to whom when dying, like Stephen,

we must commend our departing spirits, and before whose throne the worshipping throng in heaven fall prostrate with loudest ascriptions of praise—He must be God. In no other character would I dare to treat him, thus honoring “the Son, even as we honor the Father.” To do so would involve the guilt of idolatry, and incur the displeasure of Him who will not give his glory to another.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST SHOWN FROM THE NATURE OF THE WORK ASSIGNED HIM.

SOME Unitarian writers of distinction have, with characteristic boldness, taken it on them to say that such a Saviour—possessed of a nature so exalted and glorious, as is embraced in the faith of the orthodox churches—was, for the purposes of God’s moral government, altogether unnecessary. “All,” says Dr. Priestley, “that can be said for it is, that the doctrine, however improbable in itself, is necessary for the explanation of some particular texts of Scripture; and that if it had not been for these particular texts, we should have found no want for it; for *there is neither any fact in nature, nor any one*

purpose of morals, which are the object and end of all religion, that requires it." The same sentiment has been echoed by scores of inferior writers who have embraced the "liberal views" of the great doctor. This has been a favorite topic with the opposers of Christ's divinity from the very first, and we meet with it, in some form, in almost every book which advocates their sentiments. This is done to allay all fears in the minds of the unwary as to the consequences of the opposite errors, that they might be put off their guard, and be the more easily persuaded to part with "the faith once delivered to the saints." This course, considered as an instance of "cunning craftiness," whereby the simple-hearted are deceived, may be adapted to the end contemplated; but its impiety and presumption deserve the severest animadversion. If men had but a little of the modesty and humility that so highly become them, they would be slow to pronounce judgment on the plans and doings of their Maker. It is as ridiculous as it is impious for the poor, short-sighted creature, who is but of yesterday, and knows nothing, to put on important airs, and assume to tell what was and what was not necessary, in order to redeem and save sinners. *What can we know of the great principles in-*

volved in the divine administration. Well might the inspired man exclaim, "Such knowledge is too high for me ; I cannot attain unto it." The connections, dependences, and various ramifications of Jehovah's government, extend altogether beyond our reach ; and the grounds of his particular acts, any further than he has been pleased to reveal them, lie in a deep we can never fathom. What was necessary in order to save the fallen creature, and at the same time most effectually secure the ends of God's moral government, no creature is competent to decide. The incarnation, the apostle informs us, was the great mystery of godliness—that connected with it were "things into which the angels desire to look : " and yet presumptuous men speak as if they comprehended the whole system, and discovered the *uselessness* of what the infinitely wise God tells us it *became him* to do. The incarnation serves no one purpose of morals. Vain man, what madness animates thee ! We pity, and pray God to forgive the poor diminutive creature, who, puffed up with senseless pride, thus exalts himself against his Maker.

For the pious and truly rational man it is *quite enough* that, in the wisdom of God, it was *thought necessary* that *He* who in the beginning

was with God, and was God, should become flesh and dwell among us. We are, on the same authority, informed that "such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, *and made higher than the heavens.*" Again, referring to the legal sacrifices, and reminding us that "almost all things are, by the law, purged with blood," the apostle proceeds: "It was, therefore, *necessary* that the patterns of things in heaven should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." "Thus it is written, and thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer." Here is the ground of our confidence in the cross. If no reason were given, or discoverable, to justify the incarnation of the divinity; God has told us that such a Saviour became us—was necessary for us—and this is quite sufficient. Deep and high as are the mysteries communicated, when God himself, or some one in his name, speaks, I admit all, receive all, believe all; and my faith is never more rational than when it rests alone on the word of Him who cannot lie.

But to meet opposers on their own ground, it may be proper to suggest some considerations, showing, from the nature of the case, the propriety and necessity of our having such a Re-

deemer and Mediator as is spoken of in the above plain passages.

A creature, however dignified, could do no thing toward making atonement for sin. This is so obvious to the reflecting mind, that most of those who deny the divinity of Christ also reject the doctrine of atonement: and consistency requires this at their hand; for no created being, who is for himself held to account for the full and constant exercise of all his powers in the service of his Maker, can, by any means, "redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him." How much less, then, could one of finite capacity redeem the myriads of our fallen race! The supposition involves strange and most dishonoring views of that holy and perfect law which has been violated; and it must be admitted, that if a part of Christ's peculiar work was, in the proper sense of the term, to atone for sin, to satisfy the demands of injured justice by his own vicarious sufferings, the undertaking requires an agent of infinite capacity—one whose acts are invested with an infinite meritoriousness.

That Christ did thus make atonement, is clearly proved by the following passages:—

1. Take all that class of texts which speak *of the vicarious sacrifices and sin-offerings of*

the patriarchal, Mosaic, and Jewish dispensations. If these sacrifices, of God's appointment, were not typical of Christ's vicarious sacrifice, what were they? For what purpose were they instituted? Why were so many thousands of harmless victims slain, and such rivers of blood shed, if not to typify the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, slain by appointment from the foundation of the world? For all this profusion of blood no rational account can be given by the enemies of the atonement. The very best hypothesis they can invent is futile, and altogether unsatisfactory. The substance of all they have been able to offer may be summed up in the language of Dr. Bruce. "Sacrifices," says this Socinian doctor, "were a symbolical address to God, expressing the devotion, repentance, and other pious emotions, of the sufferer." A strange method, certainly, of expressing devotion and other pious emotions! What kind of devotion or pious affections could possibly be expressed by the flowing blood, and the quivering, smoking flesh, of suffering animals? The fact is, that unconnected with the atonement, of which they are most expressive types, such scenes of suffering and blood would tend to destroy rather than promote pious, devout

affections. Such scenes in themselves were calculated to blunt rather than improve moral feelings; to render the worshipers cruel and ferocious rather than humane and merciful. I cannot forbear to remark here, while Unitarians and Arians are constantly declaiming about the mercy of God, and the mildness of his administration, this explanation they give of the sacrifices he has instituted involves the greatest cruelty. It charges the merciful God with delighting in the blood of bulls and goats. A strange exhibition of mercy is this! What mercy it manifests in butchering millions of animals, and shedding oceans of blood, even the blood of his own dear Son, without any necessity for such a sacrifice. This attempt to evade the testimony of the Jewish ritual in favor of the doctrine of atonement, charges the whole system of revelation with cruelty and blood. But when this great truth is admitted, the whole appears in beautiful and affecting consistency. The millions of sacrifices that were offered were many proofs of the doctrine of atonement. The dying agonies of every victim whose blood stained the altar, to the believing worshiper, spoke of Calvary, and proclaimed that *before* mercy can be exercised in saving

ners, justice must be satisfied—that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” The groans of the dying animals were hushed in the prophetic announcement they contained, “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.”

Here is an object worthy of the compassionate, merciful God. He requires the death of animals; but it is only that he may the more effectually direct attention to his own “unspeakable gift”—the suffering Saviour—“a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they.”

The same sacrificial and typical blood was sprinkled on the mercy-seat, the visible throne of God, where his glory shone forth, to show that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, while mercy and truth go before him.”

Moses was also commanded to sprinkle both the book and all the people, thus signifying that their sins were to be washed away, and the curses written against them avoided, only by the peace-speaking blood of Christ, as a lamb without spot or blemish. But it is not necessary further to specify particulars in the worship of the Jewish church, which have a most instructive reference to the incarnation

and redeeming acts of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the doctrine of vicarious atonement, which we regard as fundamental—the very cornerstone of the whole system—be rejected, that splendid ritual which God gave to his ancient church is at once stripped of its glory, and becomes an unmeaning collection of burdensome, and worse than useless, ceremonies. But it is evident that these are prophetic acts: it is in this character that the evangelists and apostles refer to them; and in them, no less than in the verbal announcement of the ancient seers, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” The conclusion is obvious. In accordance with these types and symbols, Christ did make atonement for sin. But no creature could do this. Therefore Christ was not a creature, but God, one with the Father, as he said he was.

We are led to the same conclusion with equal certainty by examining the language of the New Testament. Sacrificial terms are employed in reference to Christ, and various modes of expression adopted which manifestly refer to the legal sacrifices under the former dispensation. Jesus is the Lamb of God, which he himself, as the High Priest of our *profession*, offered up without spot or blemish.

He entered into the holy place, not with the blood of others, but with his own blood, to appear in the presence of God for us. Thus, by a more perfect sacrifice, once offered, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Such allusions every one knows are of frequent occurrence. To those who recognize the atonement as the channel through which mercy flows to the guilty—that which, in the language of the apostle, declares the righteousness of God ; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth—these sacrificial terms are intelligible. But blot this precious doctrine from the system, and a great part of the New Testament, as well as the Old, becomes obscure and enigmatical.

Attention is now directed to a few passages which assert the doctrine of atonement yet more positively. The testimony on this subject is abundant. The sacrificial death of the Messiah being, as we have seen, shadowed forth by numerous types and symbols, was also predicted by prophets, proclaimed by apostles, preached by Christ himself, and celebrated in rapturous songs by the church on earth and in heaven. Hundreds of texts prove this cardinal doctrine. Being of infinite importance as the *only* sufficient ground of hope for the

perishing sinner, through the mercy of God, it is taught so abundantly and clearly that he who runs may read.

Isaiah assures us that, as our substitute, the blessed Redeemer "was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the *chastisement of our peace* was upon him, and by *his stripes we are healed*; and that it pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put to grief, and to *lay upon him the iniquities of us all*."

Daniel predicted that the Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself; that by his death he should make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness.

The apostle Paul declares that we are "bought with a price—redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, who gave himself a ransom for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. He has purchased the church with his own blood—has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Him hath God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, and made him to be sin (a sin-offering) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God

Peter affirms that Jesus Christ suffered for our sins, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;" that "his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

The apostle John assures us again and again, that the Saviour whom he worshiped as the author and finisher of our faith, was "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

And our blessed Lord himself, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, declares that he "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

These, and a great many other passages of similar import which might be cited, clearly prove a vicarious atonement. The most ingenious efforts to silence their testimony must be in vain; the sophistry, which has sometimes been plied with temporary success, may be easily detected; and when exposed will be obvious to the humblest and most illiterate mind. Probably to some, who are familiar only with Unitarian writings, the whole subject of the atonement has been enveloped in darkness; because they find it frequently represented that such terms as *ransomed*, *redeemed*, *purchased*, *bought*, &c., are only metaphorical expressions—forms of speech

adopted by the apostles from habit, or from a wish to accommodate themselves to the usage of their correspondents and disciples. It is also said, with apparent sincerity and confidence, that "the death of Christ is styled a sacrifice only in allusion to the sacrifices of the legal dispensation, and not because he died as the sinner's substitute."

It would be well for those whose faith has thus been shaken, to inquire on what authority these dogmatical assertions are made. The examination would show them not only without, but against, all authority; justified neither by the principles of language nor common sense. He who makes them, *darkens counsel by words without knowledge*: he confounds types with anti-types, shadows with substances, and envelops in darkness and confusion a precious truth which the Scriptures had taught very plainly. "The law was a shadow of good things to come;" the promised Deliverer, his offices, work, and benefits, were the substance—"the good things to come." This is the order the Holy Ghost has established; but the Unitarian comment inverts this order, inasmuch as it represents the redemption by Christ—the ransom he paid, and the sacrifice he offered—as mere *shadows, embellishments of*

speech, and figurative allusions to redemption from Egypt, legal sacrifices, &c.

Whenever these sacrificial terms are applied to Christ, we are told "they are borrowed from Jewish sacrifices because of an apparent resemblance between the death of Christ and the death of a victim." Thus have men attempted to reduce the atonement—which is the central sun of the Christian system—to a mere *metaphorical sacrifice*, and a false metaphor at that; for it is founded on only "an apparent," not a real, resemblance. Such miserable attempts to explain away the simple and unambiguous statements of inspired men need no comment.

But, perhaps from some apprehension that honest and thoughtful men, who read the Bible for themselves, would after all believe that the sacrificial death of our Saviour was something more than a figure of speech, the advocates of Unitarianism give us another specimen of their skill in criticism, by declaring "the words in Greek, which are translated *for*, are equivocal," and do not always imply substitution. Hence they infer, that, though Christ died for us, he did not die in our stead, but only for our benefit or advantage. This is a puerile attempt that any man making the least pretension to philological

knowledge has good reason to be ashamed of. It is founded in ignorance, and can have influence only with those who have not access to the original. Such assertions might lead the English scholar to suppose that the Greek prepositions are more equivocal than the word *for*, by which they are rendered in our own language. This is not true. The preposition *for* has various shades of meaning, which are readily distinguished by any one having a tolerable knowledge of the language; which is precisely the case with the Greek words in question. Suppose I inform any common-sense English scholar that an orange was given *for* a lemon, would he have any difficulty in understanding the particular meaning of the word *for*? Certainly not. He knows perfectly well that it means exchange or substitution. Nor would he likely alter his opinion, though the Unitarian critic should suggest that he is quite mistaken; that the word *for* is equivocal—it has various significations—and, therefore, he ought not to conclude that there was any exchange or substitution in the case. The most illiterate would probably laugh at such a contemptibly foolish criticism. With equal contempt will the plain, unpretending Christian, regard that criticism, which denies that there is any substitution im-

d in such passages as these :—"He gave self a ransom for us;" "He died for us, just for the unjust;" "Christ died for the wretched." And still more ridiculous will such needless criticism appear to those who understand the force of the original. The radical meaning of the preposition *ὑπέρ* (*hyper*) is substitution. And the last-quoted passage might be more literally rendered, Christ died *above* the wretched. This most forcibly and touchingly represents his sacrificial death. The guilty, law-condemned sinner, is represented as lying prostrate at the feet of his offended Sovereign, and the arm of divine justice ready to strike the fatal blow: but the blessed Redeemer, moved by infinite compassion, throws himself upon the cross above the guilty; receives the stroke; is crucified, wounded, bruised, and put to grief; that his inner might escape. The other preposition, translated *for*, is *ἀντί*, (*anti*), and the ordinary meaning of this also is substitution. It was the command of the law, "Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." Almost any number of passages might be selected, showing most clearly that substitution was intended. This meaning of the word being established from its use in other scriptures, any argument against the orthodox

doctrine, based on the alledged equivocal meaning of the original text, must be entirely fallacious. The ineffectual effort only shows the weakness of error, and the insufficiency of the refuges to which its advocates flee for shelter. They will never alter the faith of sensible men by declaiming about the various meanings of the words in which any important doctrine is stated. They eagerly tell us that the Greek prepositions have various meanings. This we all know. But what if they have? Is it not truly surprising that men who have some regard for their reputation as scholars should mention this as a peculiarity? The same is true of our own and other languages. The words which are employed to state and prove *all* doctrines have various shades of meaning. The most perspicuous and definite statements that can be made on any subject contain words which are capable of expressing various shades of thought, and the business of the expositor is to show what the terms do mean as they are connected, and not what they possibly may mean when used in different connections. Let those who oppose the doctrine of atonement address themselves to this task, and, like true philologists, show some reason for the *rendering* they suggest; or their irrelevant asser-

will be regarded as unworthy attempts to
 like those who do not sufficiently interest
 selves in religious discussions to detect the
 7.

fore dismissing this subject I must advert
 other attempt that is frequently made to
 age this most precious and important doc-
 of revealed religion. It is said that "the
 translated atonement (Rom. v, 11) means
 7 the reconciliation or at-one-ment of per-
 before at variance." This is very true :
 ord is so translated in other places, and no
 arian need object to the substitution of
 iliation for atonement. Thus far then we
 ; but with regard to the application of the
 when translated, whether the reconcilia-
 : to be considered as on the part of man
 or of both God and man, we differ widely.
 3 Unitarian having obtained, by conces-
 the word reconciliation as expressive of
 tonement made by the death of Christ,
 s that "God never was unreconciled, and
 the only reconciliation needed had re-
 to man, and consisted in doing away our
 y and rebellion against him." But this
 sion, at which the advocates of Socinian-
 arrive with such apparent ease, is a mere
 option of the point in dispute. It is easy

to assert that God was never, in any sense, unreconciled to man—that nothing stood in the way of the happiness and salvation of the sinner but his own impenitence and continued rebellion; but it is possible that the plain teaching of the Bible may invalidate these unauthorized statements.

Those who oppose the atonement have some apparent encouragement in maintaining the positions they assume, from the alledged fact, that in the Scriptures of truth man is always said to be reconciled to God, but God is never said to be reconciled to man. To this it has been replied, "That were the statement true, it would not prove what is intended." In the language of Scripture the *offending* party is said to be reconciled when the party *offended* is pacified. Thus it is said, (Matt. v, 23,) "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Here the *offending* brother is commanded to go and be *reconciled*, while every one knows that the plain meaning of the injunction is, that by proper acknowledgments or restitution he should *endeavor to satisfy the brother offended*. And,

in like manner, when men are said to be reconciled to God, this mode of expression does by no means exclude, but rather implies, his reconciliation toward them. And this is confirmed by other expressions in Scripture applied to the same subject. As the anger of God must be considered a manifestation of his righteous displeasure, to appease or pacify that anger is tantamount to a reconciliation on his part. It prevents the infliction of rigorous justice, and leads to the exercise of merciful kindness. Ezek. xvi, 63: "That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am *pacified* toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord." Again, Isaiah xii, 1: "O Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortedst me." These, and many other passages of similar import, show that something was necessary to pacify or reconcile our offended God; not because he was implacable, or disinclined to pity and pardon the sinner, but because he might not do this against the demands of justice. These demands were met by our blessed Redeemer when he appeared to "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." By suffering, the just for the unjust, he removed

these barriers ; so that now the streams and mercy flow from the divine fountain no other obstructions than those present the sinner's continued impenitence and rebellion. In view of this gracious interposition the contrite believer may well join the apostle saying, "We also glory in God, through Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." This language must refer primarily to the satisfaction of injured, insulted justice. It cannot refer to the work of reconciling man to God, by destroying his enmity, as will be evident on a more careful reflection. How could we *receive* reconciliation in this sense ? It would certainly be a strange mode of expression to say, "*We have received the laying aside of our enmity.*" We have received the ceasing to oppose and hate. Equally void of good sense is the construction which this fundamental error forces on all passages which speak of the death of Christ as a propitiation. Perhaps few of its advocates are prepared to say plainly that the sufferings of the Lord Jesus were intended only to appease or propitiate the sinner—that the offering was made to *man* and not to *God*—yet they directly teach this ; it is necessarily involved in *their* theory, though the Scriptures direct

positively assert the contrary. According to the Bible, the dying Saviour had respect to the demands of rectoral justice—"he magnified the law and made it honorable;" but, according to Unitarianism, the sole object of that costly sacrifice was to satisfy the unreasonable demands of the rebel, and propitiate his favor.

Against the precious doctrine of vicarious atonement, or propitiatory sacrifice, offered up by Christ, our appointed substitute, it has been warmly objected, that "it represents God as naturally implacable and unmerciful; that he is not naturally propitious, nor can his vengeance be satiated without the everlasting destruction of sinners, or something equivalent to this." It would seem that this is a popular view of the subject among our enemies; and it is industriously presented to inconsiderate persons whom they may hope to prejudice against the truth. It is painful to animadvert on such gross misrepresentations, especially when there is so much reason to fear that the miserable caricature is a willful contrivance to disparage a doctrine too strongly fortified to suffer from any fair and honorable mode of attack. Perhaps it is too much to suppose that all the declaimers who assert that by maintaining the doctrine of *atonement* we "magnify the Son above the

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Father—that we ascribe all grace to Christ, and all wrath to God”—are capable of appreciating the shameful misrepresentation of the second-hand statements they are employed to retail. But there are others who know that their representations are as false as they are injurious. They know that the sacrifice of Christ was never deemed, by any who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of the atonement, to have *made God placable*. The commonly received doctrine of the atonement implies no such thing. No individual, much less any community of Christians, holding this doctrine, can be designated, who, either from the pulpit or the press, have represented God as “implacable,” or attributed “all grace to Christ, and all wrath to God.” Our enemies well know that we regard this notion with abhorrence, believing, as we do, that all the teachings of natural and revealed religion unite in proclaiming “the Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness.” We constantly affirm that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are equal in all divine perfections; equal in mercy, in grace, and in love: that in the great purpose to redeem and save perishing sinners the several persons of the

Godhead graciously unite. We also hold that when God laid help on One that was mighty to save—when he sent his own Son into the world to “suffer, the just for the unjust”—he manifested, in the most wonderful manner, his natural placability, his merciful kindness, toward those most guilty and undeserving. His own announcement of this great provision is, “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” In view of such love, the redeemed, regenerate sinner, may well exclaim, with the deepest emotion, “*Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!*” “We love him, because he first loved us.” How very different the views of modern Unitarians and the holy apostles on this subject! The former profess to see in the atonement only an exhibition of God’s wrath and implacable hatred; while the other, gazing on the cross, exclaims, “Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” The Unitarian inquires how we can love a God who could not pardon without a vicarious atonement? while, in view of this very atonement, the apostle declares, “We love him, because he

first loved us." "For God commended love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

These objectors, having denied the Lord bought them, complain that the common received doctrine of the atonement implies God is naturally implacable and revengeful but the Scriptures rebuke their impiety, saying "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." A multitude of passages might be presented, showing how divinely glorious the grace of God appears, as witnessed and illustrated by the strangely poignant sufferings of his Son. For the riches of this goodness there are depths which the angels desire to look ; and it is the constant prominence of this view that makes the preaching of the cross so efficient in conquering and subduing the rebellious. When we bring our sins into the light or vary they must appear exceeding sinful. They call for repentance, in dust and ashes, before Him who gives such astonishing proof of infinite love. And, strange as it may seem, the same exhibition which leads the sinner to despair of himself, encourages him to hope in the mercy of God. Contemplating the cross and its

tim, he is at once abased and emboldened. The heart of stone is broken, and the broken heart finds a balm for its wounds. If the light reflected on his nature's deep sinfulness extorts the confession, "Behold, I am vile," there is a Fountain at hand to wash his stains away; and, despairing of help from any earthly source, he is able to say, in humble confidence, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Indeed this precious doctrine, which some, in their blindness, have considered a useless speculation, is not more essential to the symmetry and perfection of the system of doctrines divinely revealed, than for its connection with experimental and practical godliness. Where it is denied, there is but little evidence of either deep, godly sorrow, or holy, religious joy. He who rejects an atoning Saviour leaves the substance, and grasps the shadow: he substitutes for the active principle of a truly religious life the cold forms of heartless worship; resting in a mere morality, which is of no account unless enlivened by faith.

If, then, the Scriptures teach, and the necessities of the case demand, an atonement for sin, the Saviour of man must possess a nature

adapted to this work ; he must have resources to make the required satisfaction, or his work can never be accomplished : and a few remarks may be sufficient to show the candid, reflecting reader, that no finite, created being, can make satisfaction for the sins of others. The law of God, which demands the obedience of all his creatures, has claims commensurate with the abilities he has given. Not one, from the highest intelligence in heaven to the feeblest son of Adam, but is bound, at all times, to employ to the utmost all the energies he possesses in the service of his Maker ; and, when all is done, he has only performed what was his duty to do : “ He cannot, by any means, redeem his brother, or pay to God a ransom for him.”

The argument for Christ’s essential divinity, from this source, stands thus :—

He did, according to the Scriptures, make satisfaction or atonement for sin, which no created or dependent being could do : therefore he is not a creature, but God ; one with the Father, and equal in power and glory.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HUMANITY OF OUR SAVIOUR IS AN IMPORTANT ARTICLE OF FAITH.

THE apostles, who gloried only in the cross by preaching the Crucified, maintain his proper manhood in mysterious union with the divinity, which they also so positively assert. They teach most plainly that the body which was prepared him, and which, in wonderful condescension, he took into union with the glorious perfections of the Godhead, was invested with all the essential properties of a perfect human nature, and as such, though sinless, exposed to suffering and death.

Some of the cavils with which Unitarians assail this doctrine will be noticed hereafter. It is now proposed to consider a few of the passages which teach it, and the important religious uses to which inspired men have applied it.

The first intimation of hope for fallen, ruined man, was in the promise of the incarnation of his glorious Deliverer: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The same was repeated with more distinctness to Abraham, Gen. xxii, 18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

He who was "the seed of the woman"—"the seed of Abraham"—was undoubtedly a human being, possessed of whatever essentially belongs to our nature; and the reference of these passages is obviously to Christ. It is true some have ventured to interpret the last-quoted text to mean, simply, that the Gentile nations should derive great advantages from the preservation of true religion among the Jews, and that it should spread with its benign influences from among the descendants of Abraham to all people. This sentiment, though in itself true, falls very far below the meaning of the text, as the whole connection abundantly shows; but we need not depend on any such argument.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, puts the matter beyond all doubt, and takes it quite out of the reach of all criticism: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Here Christ is called the seed of Abraham, because he assumed human nature—became truly man, and in that nature which "he took upon him" was as really man as any other descendant of Abraham. And further, in direct contradiction of the notion that the body of Christ, because conceived and born of a

virgin, was a divine or spiritual substance, the same apostle declares: "He took not on him the nature of angels, who are spirits," but the seed of Abraham. John (i, 14) teaches that "the Word which was with God, and was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us." This expression, "flesh," as every one must know, is used throughout the Scripture to denote human nature or human beings: "All flesh is grass," "To thee shall all flesh come," and other similar passages, show the sense attached to the term *flesh* by the inspired writers. It denotes the entire human being, having soul and body; and in such nature we are assured the great Deliverer appeared to tabernacle among men, "being made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death"—"to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

The importance of this doctrine is not always duly appreciated; and some modern Arians have attempted to cover their denial of the proper Godhead of our Redeemer, by professing to believe him altogether divine; that is, they alledge that the visible corporeal nature of Christ, because of its miraculous conception, was itself essentially divine; thus plainly contradicting not only the facts of his real humanity, which have been fully attested, but also the

positive declaration of the inspired apostle, that "in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren." This hypothesis, invented to obviate the difficulties which so encumber their anti-evangelical system, is refuted by so many passages of Scripture, that it is needless further to expose its falsehood. We will now notice the use which inspired men have made of this great mystery—the divine incarnation, or God manifest in the flesh.

They assume that it was a necessary qualification for his office as our High Priest, that he should thus familiarize himself with human condition: "Such a High Priest became us." In his Godhead and manhood united they discover a sufficient foundation for our confident reliance under all the trials of life. We may come boldly to the throne of grace, because there is a Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, "for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Having such a High Priest, who is passed into the heavens; who exercises toward the sincerely penitent at once the infinite mercy of God, and all the tender sympathies of his spotless human nature; *our confidence is greatly encouraged, and we*

can patiently endure all things ; singing, even in the darkest night of our sorrow and afflictions,

“ His mercy’s as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.”

While Jesus is our Advocate with God, he will not quench the smoking flax ; the bruised reed shall not be broken : for he knows what sore temptations mean,

“ And in his measure feels afresh,
What every member bears.”

If it be said, that, in the character we have attributed to our Saviour as the omniscient God, he must have known all our griefs and sorrows without the necessity of sharing them, it is admitted : but such knowledge, though perfect on his part, does not, like that which is derived from experience, beget confidence on the part of his afflicted followers. When called to pass through deep waters, and the billows seem about to overwhelm us, we may reveal our distress to any kind-hearted friend ; but who does not know that, in the evil hour, the stricken heart instinctively relies on those who are known to have felt the same anguish, with peculiar confidence that their assistance and sympathies cannot be withheld ? Others may be equally kind, and disposed to afford relief ; and *we ourselves* may admit that they deserve to

be approached with equal confidence ; but, in spite of this acknowledgment, we are far more ready to unbosom our burdened hearts to those who are known to have personal experience of the same distresses. This is a part of our constitution ; and the tendency is so strong, that it is in vain to reason against it. So it is in our religious confidence. We believe that God is infinitely wise and good ; that his tender mercies are over all his works ; “ that even as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him ; ” “ for he knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust.” These are truths of which no Christian admits a doubt. But when the believer looks to his Saviour as God manifest in the flesh, himself “ enduring grief ” while he suffered wrongfully, like the holy apostle he rejoices greatly that “ we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmity, but was in all points tempted like as we are.” In him we recognize a sympathy and fellow-feeling which we do not readily attribute to any being known to be infinitely removed from our frail and suffering state. And knowing that he has passed into the heavens for us, where he is worshiped as the Lamb that was slain, we take encouragement to “ come boldly unto the throne of grace,

that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Another important end secured by the incarnation was, that in the Saviour's life the world is furnished with a living embodiment—a most perfect exemplification—of the spirit and practice of religion. The virtues he bids us cherish he has divinely illustrated, having left us an example that we should walk in his steps. This example of Christ, after which his followers are to fashion their lives, is often referred to, and a few reflections will show its importance.

1. Examples have a peculiar power to excite us to the practice of holiness, above what is found in the naked precept, because they more clearly express to us our duties in their subjects and sensible effects. General precepts impart the abstract ideas of the duties enjoined; but when the example is before us, the virtues we are to cultivate appear in all their circumstances. Besides instructing us in what is our duty, example shows the possibility of performing it. When we see others, who like ourselves are united to frail flesh, overcoming great difficulties, and successfully resisting the most seductive temptations, we are encouraged in our spiritual warfare, and labor with more zeal for a similar ascendancy over the many subtil and

powerful enemies that remain about and within us. The life of the Saviour is often referred to as the pattern after which Christians are to live. He has left us an example that we should follow in his steps : this example has both perfection and adaptation. If he had been a mere man, some imperfection would have appeared in his life ; nor are we safe in following the best of men, even an apostle, any further than he follows Christ. If, on the other hand, he had been God, and not man, or, as is alledged, a "being all divine," his example would have been nothing to us ; because all that attaches to such a being must be infinitely above our capacity. But being, as the apostle declares, "God manifest in the flesh," he has given us a model which is absolutely perfect, while, at the same time, the attractive excellences of character which shone forth in the various relations he sustained are imitable. They call us not only to admire, but to emulate. His strong affection for virtuous friends—his benevolence toward his bitterest enemies—his humility and patience, self-denial and zeal, with every other grace, even to the beauty of holiness—appeal directly to the heart, producing the strong conviction, that "even so ought we to walk and *please God.*"

But the real humanity of Christ seems especially important, because of its necessary connection with his work of sacrifice. This view also is frequently presented in the Scriptures, and made a prominent point in the references of inspired men to the sufferings of Christ. A body was prepared him, that, in it, he might "bear our iniquities, and die for us, the just for the unjust." We see Jesus made a little lower than the angels—that is, in his assumed nature, becoming man, of the seed of Abraham—and learn that this wonderful humiliation was expressly undergone "for the suffering of death," that thus he might "redeem them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." If it became him, as we have seen, to take our feeble nature, that he might hunger, and thirst, and toil; that he might meet the contempt of men, weep over their impenitence, and endure the hour and power of darkness: his alliance to our proper manhood was even more necessary, in order that he might agonize in the garden, and expire on the cross; thus paying the penalty, death for death, and purchasing eternal life for every believer in his merit. The prophets, who foretold the coming of Messiah; the evangelists, who narrate his wonderful life; and the apostles, who preach salvation through

his name ; agree that the voluntary sufferings he underwent in our stead were necessary, in order to the accomplishment of his design ; that the wisdom of God devised no other way for the recovery of the lost ; and that to capacitate him for those sufferings, it was equally necessary for him to take our nature into union with his ineffable divinity.

It may further be observed, that those who deny this feature of gospel truth, involve themselves and their theory in difficulties from which there is no escape. They profess greatly to dislike what is mysterious in doctrine, and boast of a system free from embarrassments of this kind. In view of their own professions, we may most reasonably demand them to explain how this *divine Being, having but one nature*, could possibly endure what is, by inspiration, attributed to Christ ; how he could hunger, and thirst, and bleed, and die, and yet hold nothing properly human in union with his divinity. The Scriptures represent that the angels, and even spirits redeemed from the earth, are incapable of any such suffering. Though vigorously employed, they are never faint or weary ; they have no need of rest day nor night ; neither can they die any more. He who made them *ministering spirits*, stamped on these, his ra-

tional creatures, immortality, as a necessary condition of their being: yet they are at an infinite remove below that "divine Being," who, if we are to believe this class of Unitarians, was wearied with a day's journey; sought refreshment in sleep; and, being overcome by his implacable enemies, suffered a most painful and ignominious death. It is certainly a little strange that men who affect great surprise at our credulity for believing that the divine Logos or Word, which was God, became flesh, that is, took upon him our nature, and dwelt among men, (though our faith in this great mystery of godliness is authorized by the most express declarations of the Bible;) should believe, apparently without difficulty, and in the absence of anything like explicit testimony, that a Being, "all divine," and infinitely above the highest order of angels, had, in his own proper nature, flesh, and blood, and bones, and was capable of pain, even to the agonies of a violent death. It is frankly confessed that our views of the divine nature are widely different, and even we attach too much importance to reason in matters of religion to embrace any such gross absurdity.

CHAPTER XIII.

NECESSITY OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST TO
THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE peculiar and distinguishing doctrines of revelation are the only sufficient key to the right interpretation of those passages which contain indirect allusions to these doctrines.

Many texts of Scripture admit of no rational interpretation, except in view of the great Bible truth that "God was manifest in the flesh." Admit this truth, which is so positively asserted, and all is plain; peculiarities of expression are accounted for, and language that else had been strangely enigmatical is seen to be divinely adapted to reveal the Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us. But when this truth is denied, a great part of the Bible must be regarded as highly figurative and hyperbolic. The language must often be wrested from its ordinary meaning, and subjected to such hypothetical construction as may suit either the peculiar theological notions or the lawless imagination of the expositor. We need not look for anything like agreement among the advocates of error, in their methods of evading the *testimony* of the inspired oracles against them;

for, having forsaken the highway of truth, they are led into devious paths, and each hath his doctrine, hath his interpretation. They can easily agree that certain passages do not mean what all orthodox Christians believe them to teach. When a doubting disciple is at length fully convinced by the incontestable miracle of his Master's resurrection, and with adoring wonder confesses his faith by exclaiming, "My Lord, and my God!" they agree that he did not mean to ascribe divine honors to the person addressed. When the prophet designates the "Son that was to be born, and the child given," as the "mighty God," they agree that it is only a hyperbolical description of some created being. When they read of Him who made all things in heaven and in earth, whether thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers; who was before all things, being the first and the last, and by whom all things consist; they still agree that some creature must be intended. They agree that it is not possible for these or any other passages of Scripture to prove the proper divinity of Christ. They agree in these propositions, because to do so is present with them; their theory requires it. But how to agree in telling what such texts of Scripture do mean they find not. Excepting those who are servile

copyists, employed only to echo the thought of other men, we find among their writers teachers not only a remarkable variety, contrariety, in the glosses, various readings, fanciful interpretations, invented, with more or less ingenuity, for the purpose of explaining away the most positive and unambiguous pronouncement of doctrine, which their faith could not allow.

Without occupying space, at present, to furnish the reader with examples of these hypothetical statements and suggestions, often inconsistent with each other as they are mutually at irreconcilable variance with the texts which they purport to be commentaries, I shall now select a few from many passages, which are incapable of any rational explanation, other than that which admits their testimony in favor of the Bible doctrine of the two natures, human and divine, united in the person of man's redeemer. In these we shall find such different qualities ascribed to Christ as cannot belong to any being who is not both God and man. But few remarks are appended to some of the texts quoted, it is because I am strongly convinced that any attempt to silence their testimony, in favor of the truth as held by orthodox Christians generally, must contain its own

futation. The most plausible things that have been offered against our views will be noticed, in connection with each passage, with only such exegetical remarks as may be thought necessary to present the truth clearly.

Our first reference is to that class of texts which describe our Saviour as both superior and inferior to the angels. The same unerring Spirit speaks of him as "far above all principalities and powers;" "higher than the heavens:" a mode of expression always including the intelligent spirits that worship before the throne. And yet this inspired teacher gives us another portrait of him, in which "we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels." (See Heb. i, 4; vii, 26; xi, 9.) If his humanity and Godhead are admitted, these testimonies are perfectly plain, and beautifully consistent with each other; but if not admitted, it will devolve on those who deny either, or both, to show how one and the same nature can be both higher and lower, more exalted and more abased, than the angels.

The most plausible attempt of Unitarians to escape the conclusion to which these passages lead is the suggestion that "the comparison instituted between Christ and angels has respect to *his offices and work*, rather than to his na-

ture." To this I reply, that his lowly, debased condition, as man, was without doubt assumed with special reference to his office and work as man's Redeemer. He stooped to a union with our nature, that in it he might suffer and die for us: so the Scriptures expressly teach. If it is not so with respect to his exaltation above angels. This is not, as is hinted by some, and avowed by others, a consequence of his benevolent labor and suffering in behalf of sinners. It was not by purchase, or acquisition, but "*inheritance*, he hath obtained a more excellent name than they." That eminent name, "the true God, and eternal life," he hath by inheritance, and solely in consequence of his natural relation to the other ineffably glorious persons existing in the adorable Trinity. This eternal exaltation is fully recognized in his prayer which was offered when the hour of his last agony was at hand: "And now, O Father glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was." From these and other references to the subject it is plain that the comparison instituted has respect to his nature, and not to his office merely, and we conclude that in the same nature he could not be, as he is described both above and below, superior and inferior to the angels.

In the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul writes as follows: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Respecting this and similar passages, Mr. Watson, with his usual clearness and force, remarks: "From many texts of this description, which appear to be but incidentally introduced, the evidence that the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ was taught by the apostles is presented to us with this impressive circumstance, that the inspired writers of the New Testament all along assume it as a point which was never, in that age, questioned by true Christians. It influenced, therefore, the turn of their language, and established a *theological* style among them, when speaking of Christ, which cannot possibly be reconciled to any hypothesis which excludes his essential divinity; and into which no honest or even rational men could have fallen, unless they had acknowledged and worshiped their Master as God."

With respect to the above passage in particular he observes: "Here the apostle is recommending an humble and benevolent disposition

to the Philippians : and he enforces it, not certainly by considerations which themselves needed to be established by proof, or in which the Philippians had not been previously instructed but in the most natural manner, and that which a good writer could adopt, by what was already established and received as true among them. It was already admitted by the Philippians as an undoubted verity of the Christian religion, that before Christ appeared in the form of a servant he existed in the form of God ; before he was found in fashion as a man, he was such a being as could not ' think it robbery to be equal with God.' On these very grounds the example of Christ is proposed to his followers, and its imitation enforced upon them. The incidental and familiar manner of introducing so great a subject clearly shows that the divinity of Christ was a received doctrine. But though introduced incidentally, the terms employed by the apostle are as strong and unequivocal as he had undertaken formally to propose it."

But, before proceeding further, let us notice the expositions by which Unitarians propose to concile the apostle's statements with their theory. I have seen but two which bear the sanction of distinguished names ; and others, less plausible do not need refutation. The *first* is, "That

Messiah appeared as God in the performance of his miraculous works, and 'the form of God' means his power of working miracles." To this it is a sufficient reply that such cannot possibly be the meaning of the phrase, because it manifestly alludes to what Christ was before he took on him the form of a servant, in which form, or nature, he wrought his miracles.

Others refer the phrase "form of God" to the visible glory of God in which he appeared to the patriarchs. This, if true, would only relieve those who resort to it from a special difficulty, by creating for them a general and still more insurmountable one. It is admitting that Christ was really the Jehovah, or Lord God of the Old Testament, which is a truth most ruinous to Unitarianism. But the word that is here rendered "being" does not refer to what is occasional; it describes the permanent state of its subject. The translation which most strictly accords with the use of the word by accredited Greek writers, is *subsisting*, and by it the apostle undoubtedly asserts the natural and permanently pre-existent state of Christ. He subsisted in the form of God, therefore, from eternity, and consequently before he made any visibly glorious manifestation of himself to the patriarchs. Having noticed these suggestions, it is now in place to re-

mark, that the word *μορφή*, rendered "*form*," does not necessarily imply bodily substance or figure; or so sensible a writer as Paul would never have applied it to God, who is a Spirit without body or parts, and consequently in this sense has no "*form*" or outward shape. If it is also occasionally used with reference to the outward and visible, which is admitted, it must here, like all other similar words, be interpreted according to the known nature of the being to whom it is applied. It may in some cases, when its subject admits of it, refer to the visible manifestation, rather than the essential nature, of that subject; but the Unitarian who ventures to assert that it is at all confined to this meaning will certainly do it at the expense of his reputation for philological learning. The assertion is likely to be made only by those who have no such reputation to jeopard, and who are distinguished for their positive airs when delivering themselves on subjects of which they have no personal knowledge: for every one who has noted the passages where the word occurs must know that it is used by the best Greek writers to express the subsistence or real nature of that to which it is applied. Examples to show this might be selected; but those for whom I especially write would not care to examine them, and the professional classical reader

will find them in more elaborate treatises on this subject. So far as this branch of the argument is concerned, it is enough to state, that the most rigid verbal criticism which has been bestowed on the peculiar phraseology of this passage very clearly demonstrates that the expression, "being in the form of God," is precisely the same in meaning as to say, "*being really and manifestly God.*"

But however strongly the truth is fortified by philological researches and reasonings, we do not rest wholly, or even principally, on these. The several clauses taken in their connection so illustrate and guard the meaning as to make it both certain and obvious to the general reader.

Four things are distinctly brought to view in this passage. 1st. The claim of Christ to equality with the Father: "he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." 2d. His exalted pre-existent state is introduced to justify that claim: "being (or subsisting) in the form of God." 3d. His voluntary surrender for a season of what was properly his own: "he humbled (or divested) himself." 4th. The low estate to which he, "in his humiliation," descended: "he took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death." A very brief consideration of these particulars will show how utterly impossible it is to

explain the text in any way that will reconcile it with the Unitarian hypothesis.

The "form of God," in which Christ existed before, is opposed to the "form of a servant," which was assumed at the time of his advent; and in such antithetical sentences the meaning attached to a particular word in one of the clauses determines the meaning of the same word in the other. What then is meant by Christ's taking on him the form of a servant? Did he actually, for a season, become a servant, or was he such only in appearance, and not really, or in fact? If the latter is ascertained to have been his state while on earth—if he was not a servant—then, possibly, so far as the testimony of this passage is concerned, in his pre-existent state, indicated by "being in the form of God," he possessed only some glorious likeness or resemblance to God, which was apparent rather than real. But if he truly and literally *became* a servant, then he certainly *was* God; or there is no force in the apostle's words and mode of reasoning. Happily we are not left to answer this question by conjecture or inference. The Father (Isaiah liii, 11) calls him his "righteous servant." And He, "the faithful and true witness," assures us that "the Son of man came not to be ministered

unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

It is evident, therefore, that when he took on him the form of a servant, there was nothing factitious in the transaction. That humble condition was really assumed; and this being so, it is equally certain that when subsisting in the form of God he was really and essentially God. Admitting both these important truths, the passage is at once plain and forcible; but denying either or both, the most acute expositors have found no escape from the glaring absurdities in which their attempted criticisms involve them.

But again, the obvious design of the apostle requires the view of the text that has been given. He is persuading the church to cultivate the humility, self-denial, and a readiness to sacrifice their ease, their honors, and themselves, if need be, in the cause of religion. In pursuance of that design, he points them to Christ as their pattern: *He* sacrificed much for them. Now what was it that, for a time, he surrendered? If a mere creature, he could sacrifice neither honor nor emolument in becoming Redeemer and Mediator between God and men. This was a glorious designation, an exaltation too high for the holiest angel in heaven. But

in this particular, also, the text fully recognizes the great distinguishing doctrine of the gospel. That which the divine Saviour temporarily surrendered for our sakes, was his equality with the Father. For, in his pre-existent state, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; and yet, astonishing condescension! he humbled himself to the low estate of a servant—exchanged the songs of angels for taunts and revilings of men; forsook his throne, and sought the cross, that, by expiating our guilt, he might open the door of hope for the perishing.

Rom. ix, 5: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, *who is over all, God blessed for ever.*" Seeing that this text asserts the two natures of the Messiah so positively, it is not strange that various and vigorous efforts have been made to alter the reading, by changing the arrangement, supplying and removing points and particles, with the intention, if possible, to make the apostle teach something else than what he appears to assert most plainly. But every attempt to reconcile this text with the Unitarian theory which I have noticed is wholly conjectural and groundless; the changes suggested being neither demanded by any principle of the language in which it was written, nor justified by any

manuscript that has ever been discovered. Intelligent Unitarians pretend to no such thing, but only alledge that *if* the slight changes they suggest *were* made, the meaning would then harmonize with their views of theology. This we readily grant, and more than this. The same is true of thousands of other important sentences. Their meaning can be entirely changed by the insertion or omission of a very small particle. I certainly desire to cultivate that charity which "covereth a multitude of sins;" yet I am obliged to write these lines under a painful conviction, that some who resort to these idle conjectures are sadly deficient in honesty as teachers of religion. The methods adopted appear as hypocritical as they are puerile. But I forbear further animadversion. The reader, put on his guard, will not be satisfied by being told that the passage *might* have been written otherwise. We are concerned with it as it is; and while it remains as a part of the testimony that God has given us of his Son, the essential Godhead of Jesus Christ will continue to be received as a doctrine of divine revelation. The lineage of Christ's proper humanity is also here stated. He descended from the stock of Israel, according to the promise made to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the

nations of the earth be blessed." He was the seed of Abraham. But his pedigree is expressly limited to that nature which he had "according to the flesh." And, lest the glories of his divine nature should for a moment be lost sight of, it is immediately added, "*who is God over all, blessed for ever.*"

Matt. xxii, 42. To the Pharisees, who had departed from the faith of their fathers, and certainly entertained very inadequate views of the Messiah, Jesus proposed this question: "What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?" They, ignorant of his higher nature, reply, in accordance with their own limited and erroneous views, "He is the son of David." This, if Unitarianism were true, was the correct answer, and deserved to be commended as such; but the Saviour immediately reminds them that David, speaking in the Spirit, calls him Lord, and asks, "How is he then his son?" This question they could not answer, and on the Unitarian hypothesis it is unanswerable. They felt the force of the interrogatory, and were silent. It convicted them of a capital error, and exposed their culpable inattention to what was written. They ought to have answered, in accordance with their own Scriptures, "*We think he is Immanuel, God with us.*" In his

human nature he was the son of David, but in his divine nature he was David's Lord and God." To the thoughtful Unitarian we propound the same pertinent and convincing question : If, as you say, Christ had but one nature, and in that nature was the son of David, "how, then, is he his Lord?" This is a simple question ; but their most ingenious attempts to escape the dilemma, in which it involves the advocates of error, have been unavailing. The reader, whose views on this great and important doctrine are not settled, is requested to answer it before proceeding further.

A similar passage is found in Rom. i, 3 ; where it is declared that this same Jesus was "made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead."

Here again we have an antithetical sentence ; and the phrases in opposition are, "seed of David"—"Son of God." The former is declared to be the nature of Christ "according to the flesh ;" the latter, "according to the Spirit of holiness ;" a mode of expression which seems designed to point out the holy, spiritual, and divine nature, of the person to whom it is applied. The supposition of some, that the "Spi-

rit of holiness" means simply a spiritual influence or energy employed in raising him from the dead, is manifestly inconsistent with the apostle's statement. The use of the preposition rendered, with sufficient accuracy, "according to," forbids this interpretation; for it is not credible that the apostle could use the same word in this clause, attaching to it a meaning so widely different from that which it necessarily conveys in a previous member of the same sentence. Besides, the simple fact that Christ rose from the dead could be no proof that he was the Son of God in a peculiar sense, unless he himself, in his higher nature, was in some way efficient in causing the resurrection of the body that was crucified. If that were a valid argument, the same could be proved of others. But the truth is, Christ was not passive in his own resurrection, as were all those whom he, by the word of his power, awoke from the sleep of death. The very manner in which he foretells that glorious event forbids the supposition. To the Jews he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days *I will raise it up again.*" "I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Here the efficiency of Christ in

performing the miracle of his own resurrection is distinctly stated ; and it is in view of this fact that his rising from the dead proclaimed him to be the Son of God with power and glory. It cannot be that Paul should assert the contrary in a formal statement of the natural exaltation of his Lord and Master. The effort to silence the testimony he bears to the two natures of Christ is unavailing, and the passage plainly contains two very important propositions.

1. Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, or with respect to his human nature, was the son of David. This needed no proof other than what the Jewish records would furnish, and hence there is none presented.

2. Jesus the Messiah, according to the Spirit of holiness, or with respect to his holy, spiritual nature, was the "Son of God," a mode of expression used, as we have seen, to express absolute divinity. This proposition required proof—it was an extraordinary claim, and could not well be maintained without the evidence of miracles ; and accordingly the apostle confidently adduces his resurrection as the most powerful proof that He, who laid down his life that he might take it again, verily was, as he claimed to be, "the Son of God." That glorious event powerfully asserted his exalted

nature, as a divine person. Any other view of the passage must greatly mar its beauty, by destroying the antithesis on which the force and propriety of the statements very much depend. A mere verbal criticism of but doubtful authority can weigh but little against the plain grammatical and logical considerations which demand the exposition I have given.

There are still other texts which assert the same important truths. Shortly before his departure from the church, addressing the Father, Jesus said, in view of his triumphant ascension, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee." John xviii, 11. Yet for the encouragement of his afflicted followers he assures them of his constant presence, saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Matt. xxviii, 20. Here are two positive assertions. In the first, Christ says that he was then about to leave the world, *to be in it no more*. In the second, that he would be present with his disciples in the world always, even to the end. If applied to any other being than "Emanuel, God with us," they are manifestly inconsistent with each other, and cannot both be true. But when predicated of Him who was originally in

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"the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God," but humbled himself to the condition of a servant, the difficulty vanishes, and the statements are each, not only credible, but a source of precious encouragement to the humble believer. He whom Paul calls "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," having finished his work as an atoning High Priest, has gone to the Father. His bodily presence "is no more in the world." But then we have an Advocate in heaven, whose pleading must prevail, while his divine presence and power remain in the church always, even unto the end. As head of the church he reveals his special favor wherever two or three are gathered together in his name.

One more passage on this point is all that my limits will allow. Many more must be passed by which are similar to those already selected, and which never can be rationally explained by those who deny the doctrines they so plainly teach. They are introduced in various connections, and continued to the very close of the sacred volume. In his last appearance to his servant on the Isle of Patmos, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, *spoke* these words: "I, Jesus, have sent mine

angel to testify these things unto you in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

Every one knows that the "root of David" means the cause or origin of David's existence, and it will devolve on those who deny the Lord that bought them, by degrading him to a mere creature, to show how Christ as a man could in any way have been instrumental in causing or producing David's existence. David had been dead for ages before Christ was born, as a branch from the stem of Jesse. How then was he the root of David? Nor do those mend the matter who attribute to their creature Christ a pre-existent state, for no creature, however exalted, is possessed of creative powers. But once admit the plain teaching of the other passages presented, and there is a beautiful consistency in this. He who could with truth say of himself to those who questioned his claims to the high character and prerogatives he had assumed, "Verily I say unto you, before Abraham was I am," in his divine nature was David's Lord and Creator—the first and only efficient cause of being to him and everything else that is; for he is before all things, and by him all things consist. Yet the body that was *prepared him* was born of a woman descended

from the royal family, and consequently the proper offspring or child of David.

Thus it is clearly shown that the world's Redeemer, who, in view of his peculiar and transcendent nature, is called by the prophet, "*Wonderful*," united in himself supreme divinity and real humanity: that while he was the true God, he was God manifest in the flesh. The same truths are attested by a multitude of circumstances attending his advent, his life, his crucifixion, and ascension. To show that the dignity of nature he claimed was fully recognized in heaven, when the Father bringeth his only-begotten Son into the world, he saith, Let all the angels worship him. At his advent a throng of seraphic worshipers forsake the harps and songs of heaven, to witness the great "mystery of godliness." Soon as his birth was announced by the angel, "suddenly there appeared a multitude of the heavenly host, crying, Glory to God in the highest." They proclaimed peace on earth and good-will toward men. They announce a Saviour—an almighty Saviour—and must not fail to give evidence of his glorious character. Hear then their testimony: "Who is," say they, "Christ the Lord;" yes, Lord both of angels and of men, and none the less worthy of their adoration because of his

assumed state of humility and abasement. But if we follow the astonished shepherds to Bethlehem, there is ample proof of his proper manhood. We see the helpless infant, at first wholly dependent on the mother's tender care, and subsequently developing, in the ordinary way, the distinctive properties of a human being. As God, the hosts above cheerfully obey him, and are ever swift to do his pleasure; as man, he himself was subject to Joseph and Mary, ever yielding them the filial obedience the law required. As God, his knowledge was perfect—he knew all things, even the most secret thoughts of the heart; as man, he sought information as others seek it, and by the ordinary means of physical and intellectual culture “he grew in stature and in wisdom.” As God, he claimed the absolute ownership of all things: by him, and *for* him, they are, and were created. His inspired servant testified of him, saying, “The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine, for thou hast made them.” But as man, who could be more impoverished than he? “He was rich, but for our sakes he became poor;” so poor, “that while the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, the Son of man had not where to lay his head.” In his wearisome journeys he was sometimes destitute of

even the coarsest fare to satisfy the cravings of hunger; but when there is necessity for a miracle to prove the divinity of his nature and mission, he multiplies a few loaves and little fishes to feed the famishing thousands. As man, he was sorely pained at the afflictions of his friends. In their affliction he was afflicted; when the sorrows of bereavement overwhelmed them, his heart shared their griefs; he groaned in spirit, the deep fountain of his sympathies was opened, and "Jesus wept." Here his perfect manhood is before us in all its tenderness, and reveals the most affecting loveliness. But "the veil, that is his flesh," could not wholly conceal the glories of his exalted nature. Diseases and devils are subject to his authority. At his touch, or word of power, the sick, the lame, the blind, are restored; unclean spirits are cast out; and the greedy grave gives up its prey—for the sleeping dead hear his voice, and come forth. As man, we see him enduring the most bitter agony; his soul exceeding sorrowful, and shrinking from the fearful hour, unable to bear the load, or drink the cup he had taken, until angels came and strengthened him. While on the cross, when bearing the iniquities of us all, he uttered that piercing complaint, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

But here again are mingled evidences of "his eternal power and Godhead." His simple announcement, "I am he," smote the officers and band of armed men with terror, so that they went backward and fell to the ground. With his touch he healed the high priest's servant; on the cross he pardoned the penitent thief, for whose prayer he even then had an ear, and to whose trembling spirit he promised a place in paradise. As man, he suffered, died, and was laid in Joseph's sepulchre; but, as God, he triumphed in his fall, spoiled the enemy in his own dominions, drew the sting of death for every believer, and rose a triumphant conqueror. Ascending on high, he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. Angels attend him to his native heaven, and shout, as they rise, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The *Lord*, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Candid reader, in view of these facts and *plain testimonies*, what estimate do you form

of the Saviour's character? Does he not claim your utmost confidence, as an almighty and sufficient Friend? Dare you, knowing that he is ever worshiped by the hosts of heaven, degrade him to a mere creature? If you love the cause of religion, I adjure you, in the language of Paul, "to beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and not after Christ; for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

"This, this is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end:

"'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll *praise* him for all that is past,
And *trust* him for all that's to come."

CHAPTER XIV.

IMPORTANCE OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST TO
PRACTICAL RELIGION.

It is fearfully hazardous to admit derogatory and unscriptural views respecting the character and claims of Christ. All that is vital in religion connects inseparably with his peculiar work as our only Redeemer and Mediator. He is the Sun of our system ; and but for the light that radiates from his cross, all had been darkness and chaotic confusion. If by the false lights of our vain reasonings we are led into error here, any material mistake with respect to this fundamental doctrine cannot fail to vitiate our views of most other important religious truths. The Scriptural view of Christ, as the atoning Lamb of God, furnishes the strongest possible demonstration of the divine goodness, and most affectingly illustrates his strangely condescending love toward man. To the evangelical believer there is an unutterable intensity and depth of precious meaning in the simple announcement, "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have *everlasting* life." Here is redemption for a

lost and ruined world, procured at infinite cost ; and a just estimate of the sacrifice which mercy provided will naturally lead the humbled soul to exclaim with deep emotion, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." Such an exhibition of unmerited kindness on the part of our heavenly Father may well kindle the fires of divine love on the altars of our hearts, until, penetrated with a sense of his goodness, and overwhelmed with holy feeling, we know at least something of the import of that impassioned declaration, "We love him because he first loved us." Springing from such a source, this divine love, that warms, and fills, and animates, the Christian heart, is more than mere sentiment. Compared with it, the admiration with which the religious theorist contemplates what he calls the natural perfections of the Deity, is cold and lifeless. Those who claim to be rational Christians, and discard the most precious and important doctrine of Christ's vicarious sufferings, may talk loudly, as they sometimes do, about the paternal character of God, and his readiness to pardon the offenses of sinners on the simple condition of their repentance and reformation : but by denying the essential Godhead of his only-begotten Son, who was freely given for us, it is plain that they almost infi-

nately lower the value of the gift; and, of consequence, they can have, comparatively, no such affecting views of the love which moved our heavenly Father to provide salvation for us. While their theory robs God our Saviour of his real nature, to the same extent that it lowers and degrades his glorious character, it lessens the Father's manifest love in sending him into the world to save sinners. And hence it is that their own love toward God must be affected by their false theology, which, in fact, annihilates the principal ground on which the Scriptures urge our duty of loving God and one another. We may go still further, and say, the supposition that Christ was a creature, makes his appointment to the office of Redeemer and Mediator an act of special favor to him. No higher honor could have been shown a creature of any rank or station, than to send him on a mission so honorable, and which was to be followed by so high and vast a reward, that he should sit with the Father on his throne; be advanced to universal dominion; and receive for ever universal homage: all as the recompense of his temporary and limited sufferings; which, on the supposition that they were not vicarious, were not greater than those endured

by his disciples after him, and, in some cases, perhaps not so great.

This same fatal heresy, as has been abundantly shown by Watson and Waterland, Sherlock and Stillingfleet, materially diminishes the love of Christ himself for sinners. It shows the Scriptures which allude to this subject to be as full of "hyperbole and exaggeration" as the most lofty descriptions of his character. On the supposition that Paul had embraced this theory in any of its modifications, it would be hard to imagine on what account he thought the love of Christ so wonderful that it "passeth knowledge."

Speaking of the effect which the Unitarian doctrine must have on our views of the love of Christ, Mr. Watson maintains that it not only diminishes, but changes, its character; that it takes from that love "its *generosity* and devotedness, presents it under views infinitely below those contained in the New Testament, and weakens the motives which are drawn from it to excite our gratitude and obedience. 'If Christ was in the form of God, equal with God, and very God, it was then an act of infinite love and condescension in him to become man; but if he was no more than a creature, it was no

surprising condescension to embark in a work so glorious, and such as would advance him to be Lord and Judge of the world—to be admired, revered, and adored, both by angels and men.’ To this it may be added, that the idea of disinterested, generous love, such as the love of Christ is represented to be by the evangelists and apostles, cannot be supported on any supposition but that he was properly a divine person. As a man and as a creature only, he would have profited by his exaltation; but, considered as divine, Christ gained nothing. God is full and perfect—he is exalted ‘above blessing and praise:’ and therefore our Lord, in that divine nature, prays that he might be glorified with the glory he had *before*. Not a glory which was new to him; not a glory heightened in its degree; but the glory he had with the Father ‘before the world was.’ In a manner mysterious to us, he humbled, he emptied himself; and when his work of suffering was done, he but returned to his own glory. The whole, therefore, was in him *generous, disinterested* love, unspeakable and affecting condescension.”—*Institutes*, vol. i, p. 458. We have here some discovery of the alarming consequences which press upon this fatal error. That where it obtains it totally annihilates the *true character* of the love of Christ, and alters

the very foundations of Christianity by doing away all the peculiar motives of the gospel which have been drawn with powerful effect from considerations of the unspeakable love, humility, and condescension, of our Lord.

I will not here urge at length, what has been briefly presented before, that the doctrine of satisfaction or atonement, which the Scriptures place as the very corner-stone of the Christian system, is utterly inconsistent with the Unitarian hypothesis. This is generally acknowledged. And consequently nearly all who embrace the notion of Christ's inferiority to the Father have openly denied the atonement. A few only of the Arian school have inconsistently professed to believe in the doctrine of atonement, while they deny the divinity of the sacrifice. They affect to invest a creature with such dignity of office as imparts to his sufferings an infinite meritoriousness. But the effort is fruitless. Their theory is scarcely less at war with the common sense of mankind, than it is with the plain testimony of the sacred writers. The great majority of all who oppose the orthodox faith, regard Christ as a man only, and accordingly no atonement in any sense is allowed to have been made by his death. This will be shown fully in another place, and is adverted to here only

to remind the reader how vastly important it is to beware of doctrinal errors which involve such practical consequences ; errors which materially affect the very terms of our salvation, and vitiate the only ground of hope for the condemned sinner. However it may be cloaked and disguised, the error is ruinous to vital religion, and we dare not leave you unwarned of the danger. It is common in this community, and I have reason to believe in other places, for those who would promote their party interests, by turning away the inexperienced from the simplicity of faith in Christ, to represent the points of difference between them and the orthodox churches as of but little importance, and wholly speculative ; that in the great practical requirements of the gospel they believe as we do. Such deception can hardly have the apology of ignorance to screen those who practice it. There is too much reason to fear that this course, in some who pursue it, is the offspring of a reckless infidelity, which, under the cover of fair pretences, attacks the very vitals of religion. Reader, if this siren note has lulled your ear, until the impression has been made that we might waive the points in controversy without serious loss to the cause of religion, be assured that you are *laboring under a ruinous deception*. These are not

points in speculative theology. A question which involves the ground of our justification before God, and our title to the heavenly inheritance, must be, in the very highest sense, practical; and so it will undoubtedly be found in the end. All the importance that attaches to a just estimate of the great evil of sin, must attach to doctrines which are denied and scoffed at by Unitarians. On the principles which we deem Scriptural, the exceeding sinfulness of sin is apparent. "It is an evil so great in itself, so hateful to God, so injurious in its effects, so necessary to be restrained by punishment, that it dooms the offender to eternal exclusion from God, and to positive endless punishment; and could only be forgiven through a sacrifice of atonement, so extraordinary as that of the death of the divine Son of God." But the consistent Unitarian holds that all transgressions of the divine law may be forgiven without an atonement; that the sinner, if penitent, may stand before his Maker with all his offenses, in his own person, and claim to be pardoned: he seeks not to be justified by the meritorious death and intercessions of his Saviour, because his faith comprehends no such medium of approach to God.

No apology can be necessary for introducing another and more lengthy paragraph from the

excellent and unanswerable argument of Watson on this subject. Speaking of the consequences which follow from a denial of the proper divinity of Christ, he says: "It totally changes the character of Christian experience. Those strong and painful emotions of sorrow and alarm, which characterize the descriptions and example of *repentance* in the Scriptures, are totally incongruous and uncalled for, upon the theory which denies man's *lost* condition, and his salvation by a process of *redemption*. *Faith*, too, undergoes an essential change. It is no longer faith in Christ. His *doctrine* or his mission are its objects; but not, as the New Testament states it, his *person* as a *surety*, a *sacrifice*, a mediator; and much less can it be called, in the language of Scripture, '*faith in his blood*.' Nor is it possible to offer up prayer to God in the name of Christ, though expressly enjoined upon his disciples, in any sense that would not justify all the idolatry of the Romish Church, in availing themselves of the names, the interests, and merits of saints. *Love to Christ*, which is made so eminent a grace in internal and experimental Christianity, changes also its character. It cannot be *supreme*, for that would be to break the first and great commandment, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with all thy heart*,' if Christ himself be not that

Lord our God. It must be love of the same kind we feel to creatures from whom we have received any benefit, and a passion, therefore, to be *guarded* and restrained, lest it should become excessive and wean our hearts and thoughts from God. But surely it is not under such views that love to Christ is represented in the Scriptures; and against its excess, as against creature attachments, we have certainly no admonition, no cautions."—*Institutes*, p. 460.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MERITS OF CHRIST DEPENDENT ON HIS EXALTED NATURE RATHER THAN ON HIS OFFICE.

BEFORE proceeding to a particular examination of the texts generally quoted in proof of Unitarian doctrines, it may be well to notice a position which the advocates of the system usually take with apparent confidence, and sometimes maintain, by the aid of misapplied quotations from the Gospels, with considerable plausibility.

They ask to be received into fellowship as good Christians, because they believe in Christ as the sent and authorized messenger of God, commissioned to teach us the way of salvation.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

and it is alledged that it was solely on this ground that Christ himself claimed the confidence of those who heard him. On this I remark, 1st. That faith in Christ, and belief of the doctrines he taught, are not identical. Evidence of his divine mission would be quite sufficient to command the latter, but could not, of itself, justify the former; for, if so, any divinely commissioned messenger might challenge our faith in him for the same reason. The prophets and apostles taught in the name, and by the authority, of Jehovah, who sent them; and the credentials to which they appeal are incontestable miracles wrought by his power. This gave *authority* to all the truths they uttered. A man is no more at liberty to reject or call them in question, than if they had been spoken by the lips of the Almighty himself. We believe their statements; but surely it does not follow that we are to look for salvation through faith in their name. Here is where the sophistry, often practiced by Unitarian declaimers, may be detected. They make a flourish about the authority of communications from God, alledging that this authority is not dependent on the personal dignity of the messenger by whom they are delivered. *What this is granted, (and the hearer will be forward*

grant it,) they shift the ground, and assert, without the shadow of evidence, that the only real ground of faith in Christ" is derived from the fact, that he was appointed and sent by the Father. This is not true. The divinity of his mission is no more a reason for the exercise of faith in Christ, than the mission of Moses or Paul would furnish for faith in them. They are God's messengers, and therefore the truths they announce are worthy of all acceptance. They ought to be believed, but they themselves are not objects of faith. And yet men claim to be acknowledged as good Christians, simply because they profess to believe in the divinity of Christ's *mission*, while they utterly deny the essential dignity of his nature, and count the blood of the covenant a common or unholy thing. This claim I cannot allow, and will not hesitate to expose its insufficiency, albeit we have heard already much whining complaint in this latitude about "persecution for opinion's sake;" which amounts only to this, that Unitarians among us are not invited to the orthodox pulpits, nor otherwise encouraged in propagating what we conscientiously believe to be a most pernicious and fatal heresy.

But let us look at the texts on which they rely. To show that Christ, as they say, never

asked or designed us to believe in his divine nature, or anything more than that he was sent of God to teach us the way of salvation, such passages as the following are quoted: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me.—As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, shall live by me." John vi, 38, 57. "Then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.—Neither came I of myself, but he sent me." John viii, 28, 42. "And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." These passages are the principal, if not the only, reliance of Unitarians in their attempts to show that faith in Christ has respect, not to the dignity of his nature, and the consequent merit of his sacrifice, but only to his office as God's appointed messenger. That any such use of the texts is wholly unauthorized, we hope to show clearly. Granting, what seems probable, that the immediate design of our Lord was simply to assert the divinity of his mission, and rebuke the infidelity of the Jews, who denounced him as an impostor, and denied his authority to teach them; it surely does not follow that *all the faith* he required of them was an acknow-

ledgment that God had sent him ; and that, consequently, they were bound to receive his doctrines as true. Such an acknowledgment by no means implies a justifying or saving faith, which has *Christ himself*, and not his doctrines merely, for its object. The folly of supposing so is too apparent to need exposure. Some of the texts quoted, manifestly refer principally to the human nature of Christ ; and some things are ascribed to him in that nature, which could not, with propriety, be predicated of his divinity. But we will not insist on this, as other considerations are quite sufficient to rescue the passages from the use that has been made of them ; and to show the weakness of the attempt made in this way to bolster up Unitarianism. If the advocates of that system have no better claim to Christian citizenship, they surely hold the inheritance of saints with an extremely doubtful tenure. It rests on an assumption not only without, but against, evidence. They assume that faith in Christ is nothing more than the belief that God sent him into the world : that, in doing this, they exercise all the faith that he ever required. This has been reiterated again and again. But where is there any authority for this confident boasting ? Nowhere. On the contrary, there is the plainest

proof that much more than this is required. Christ was "sent" of God, not as the prophets were—his was a peculiar mission; and he claimed to be received in the character of their promised Messiah. In asserting this he, of course, claimed all the dignity which the Jewish Scriptures ascribed to him whom the prophet announces as the "Mighty God, the Jehovah of hosts"—"whose goings forth were of old, even from everlasting."

But turning to other passages we learn still further, that faith must not only recognize his glorious and exalted nature, but also rely on the merit of his death: "He is the propitiation for our sins"—"We have redemption through his blood." His work of sacrifice alone declares the righteousness of God: "that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Such faith must include vastly more than the divinity of Christ's mission: being, as we have seen, a cordial reliance on the merits of his death, it must embrace the fact of his supreme divinity; for no creature can *merit* anything from God, because, when his powers have been taxed to the utmost, he has only done his duty.

If it be said that God might, if it so pleased him, accept the voluntary and vicarious sufferings of a creature, whom he has raised up and

appointed, as adequate satisfaction or atonement; it is quite enough to answer, that on the same principle he might accept the blood of bulls and of goats: whereas the apostle assures us that it was not possible for these to take away sin; which words, in their connection, certainly imply that the satisfaction depended on the intrinsic value of the sacrifice, and cannot be resolved into an arbitrary acceptance of what had no value in itself. In perfect accordance with this, we find the Scriptures frequently and plainly connect the atonement made with the exalted character, the divinity of the person suffering. It was *Jehovah* who was pierced. Zech. xii, 10. It was the Lord that bought us. 2 Pet. ii, 1. The church of God "was purchased with his own blood." Acts xx, 28. The Lord of glory was crucified. 1 Cor. ii, 8.

I need not increase the list of references, though it would be easy to do so. The reader who is familiar with the New Testament can readily supply much pertinent testimony, which I have not room to transcribe to these pages. Enough, however, has been given to show conclusively that the merits of Christ, the atonement he made for sin, connects necessarily with the divinity of his nature; and, consequently, that it is very possible for a man to believe in

the divine mission of Christ who denies the only Scriptural ground of faith in his name.

The particular phraseology of some of the texts in question will be the subject of further notice. Their general design is what we have been considering; and this, certainly, appears unfriendly to the position they are quoted to sustain. I charitably hope, that those who insist, with such apparent confidence, that they ought to be recognized as Christians holding the truth, for the reason stated above, are sincere; but must confess that this supposition does not allow a very high opinion of their knowledge and discernment in questions of Scriptural theology. Having examined their claims, candor requires us to say we must have other and better evidence that they hold, in its essential features, the faith once delivered to the saints, before the right hand of fellowship is given. Indeed, it is most unreasonable to expect, or ask this, while they themselves know that so wide a gulf is fixed between us, that either we must be idolaters, or they have no part in "the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth." If we hold the truth, and honor God by confessing the divinity and equality of his Son, the sure foundation on *which* all our hopes are built has become to

them a stone of stumbling and rock of offense. How, then, is it possible for them to desire a union with such idolaters? or how could we receive to the fellowship of the church and the ordinances of religion those who, we sincerely believe, teach damnable heresy, even denying the Lord that bought them?

I do not urge that all who are nominally Unitarians are strangers to experimental religion, or that they will certainly be lost. The possibility of their salvation is admitted, on the ground that they may in heart, and practically, embrace the truth, in spite of the erroneous and antisciptural terms in which they have been taught to express their religious sentiments. They may, and it is a welcome thought that perhaps many of them, especially of the Arian school, do, believe and trust in our adorable Saviour for pardon and eternal life; while some misapprehension of the terms employed prevents them from using the "form of sound words" in which orthodox Christians confess him among men. An error of the head may make them hesitate to acknowledge the deity of Christ, while they trust in his name, and rely on the merit of his death. It is true the system which dictates their modes of expression when speaking of Christ does not justi-

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fy this faith ; yet if they have it, and its fruit, a blessed assurance of the divine favor, the Bible does fully justify their confidence ; and we hope to meet them where the mists of error will no longer hide from them the glory of Him who “thought it not robbery to be equal with God.”

CHAPTER XVI.

ABUSE OF OUR LORD'S CONDESCENSION—PER- VERSION OF PLAIN TESTIMONY—PROOF TEXTS OF UNITARIANISM EXAMINED.

THAT the Son of God should become incarnate ; the Lord of glory stoop to a union with our frail nature, to the condition of a servant, and the death of the cross ; was most unspeakable condescension, and demands, at least, the humble gratitude of the creature he came to seek and save. But hear, O heavens ; and be astonished, earth ! they for whom he emptied himself, and became, in their stead, obedient unto death, have taken advantage of his voluntary poverty, and the meanness of the nature he assumed, to attack, through it, the essential dignity of his higher nature. Because he left the throne of heaven, and in his descent passed all higher *orders of beings*, to take on him the seed of

Abraham, they would fain rob him of the glory he had with the Father before the world was. Because he, moved with pity for our helpless misery, consented to have a body, that in it he might be pierced and bruised for our sin, might live, suffer, and die, as a man; they are ready to proclaim that he was no more than man. All this is done simply because the great mystery of godliness, the incarnation of the divine nature, is above their feeble comprehension, and crosses the imperfect and crude notions of their short-sighted reason—a reason that never appears more unreasonable than when attempting to pass judgment on matters which lie wholly without its sphere. Thus has the very kindness of our Saviour, so passing strange in its manifestations, been made an argument against his dignity; and men, with alarming boldness, have offered insult and injury to Him whose nature and mode of existence infinitely transcend their scanty measure, involving heights they cannot ascend, and depths their line can never fathom.

Foolish and impious as is this course, when once adopted it is held with great tenacity. When men have resolved to test the reasonableness of revealed doctrines by a human standard, and have become thoroughly opinionated in

their errors, it is useless to quote Scripture to convince them. The divinity of Christ, and kindred doctrines, they will in nowise believe, however distinctly they are proclaimed. Some passages may occasion a temporary inconvenience; but modes of interpretation can be invented by which the plainest evidence is set aside. The pointed and powerfully convincing testimonies brought from the Jewish Scriptures are called Hebraisms, or resolved into Eastern hyperbole. And when in the New Testament it is said, in the plainest terms, that Christ and the Father are one; that Jesus "thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" that "in the beginning" he "was with God, and was God;" yea, that he was the "great God," the "blessed God," the "true God," the "first and the last, the Almighty;" the testimony is of no account: since the very men who call so lustily for evidence are prepared to deny that the language in which the evangelists and apostles recorded it was inspired, and confidently suggest such alterations and improvements in the sacred text as suit their convenience. The authenticity of some parts of the Bible is suspected; others may be spurious, badly translated, figurative, or something else: at least it is assumed they *cannot establish* what they literally assert, and what

all orthodox Christians have ever supposed them to mean.

In justification of this course, it is sometimes said that the literal and generally received meaning of the texts in question is contradicted by other doctrines taught in the Scriptures; and that Unitarians are anxious to reconcile apparent differences in the statements of witnesses whose veracity, on the whole, they are willing to allow. They claim that the Bible, as a whole, is in favor of the Unitarian doctrine, and quote numerous passages for proof. Texts that have been thus applied, if not obviously irrelevant, merit some notice, and we will proceed to examine them.

Among numerous others, I have before me a work published by the "Unitarian Association," which proposes to furnish "one hundred Scripture arguments for the Unitarian faith." These arguments have been carefully considered, and all which are supposed to throw the least difficulty in the way of the common reader, whose opportunities for investigation and critical research are necessarily limited, will be stated in the words of the author, with such explanatory notes as may be thought proper. As each text is called an "argument," and, in several instances, five or six, in order to make up the

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number promised, are given, which assert the same thing, in nearly, if not exactly, the same words, the reader need not be surprised to find the boasted hundred arguments, by a little attention to classification, reduced to a comparatively small space. The work referred to defends Unitarianism,—

I. "Because Jesus Christ is represented by the sacred writers to be as distinct a being from God the Father as one man is distinct from another: 'I am one who bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.' John viii, 18."

The sophistry of this "argument" lies in assuming that in all cases distinct persons must have a separate existence. This is neither self-evident, nor can it be proved. All the orthodox believe, as the passage certainly teaches, that there is a personal distinction between the Father and the Son, which is real but it by no means follows that these distinct persons are not united in one indivisible substance, or Godhead. This is elsewhere asserted, and our faith embraces the fact, that the manner of it is incomprehensible.

II. "Because he is declared, in unnumbered instances, to be the Son of God: 'A voice from heaven, saying, This is my

Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Matt. iii, 17. Can a son be *coeval* and the *same* with his father?"

On this and kindred passages I observe, that they undoubtedly involve the idea of official superiority and inferiority, on the part of the Father and the Son respectively. "The Father is the fountain of deity, and, as such, the first, the original." This is implied in a multitude of other places; as when the Father is said to have appointed, sealed, given, and sent, the Son. Indeed this is a common and variously indicated doctrine of the Bible. Jesus testifies of himself, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but the Father sent me." And though the Son was the actual Creator of all things, having all power in heaven and earth, he was not in that work "without the Father, neither was the Father without the Son." The work of creation was so performed by the only-begotten Son, whose memorial is, "the true God, and eternal life," as to justify the use of such language as this, "By whom also he made the worlds." Also the testimony of Christ concerning himself: "I live by the Father. As the Father hath life in himself, even so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." The


Son, then, does not exist apart from, or without, the Father : no orthodox believer supposes so. Yet the relationship is certainly not that of a created being. No creature, however exalted, can with any propriety be said "*to have life in himself, even as the Father hath life in himself.*" Besides, the very title, Son, applied to this divine Person, contains the most convincing refutation of the strange and unscriptural notion of his inferiority of nature or essence ; for as Son he must be of the same nature with his Father. Whoever heard of paternity on the one hand, and filiation on the other, implying beings wholly different in their nature ? Yet Unitarians attempt to impose this absurdity on common people, by quoting the above and similar texts, to disprove the doctrine of Christ's proper divinity. As well might they prove him not to be man because he is called "the Son of man ;" for, if being the Son of God convicts him of any natural inferiority to the Father, his being the Son of man, for the same reason, shows that he was something less than man. But now for the sage question, "Can a son be the same with his father ?" Most certainly he can, and must be the same in nature. He belongs to neither a higher nor lower order *of beings* than the father who begat him. He

is not the same person; but that is not the question, for it is known the world over that all Trinitarians teach a distinct personality in the Godhead.

“But hold,” says one, “you have forgotten the hardest part of the question, ‘Can a son be *coeval* with his father?’ or, to express the objection a little more clearly, Is not the proposition, ‘Christ is the eternal Son of God, self-contradictory?’” “To be a son,” says the knowing Unitarian—and he blesses himself for the acumen which made the discovery—“to be a son implies generation, and a time when he was begotten, and up to that time, the son, as such, could have no existence.” But possibly this may prove a little too much for the very wise objector. Just look at it. To be a father also implies generation, and a time when he begat, and up to that time there could be no father. So it seems this Unitarian logic as much denies the eternal Father as the Son, thus verifying the inspired declaration, “Whosoever denieth the Son hath not the Father.” But we will not stop with showing the absurdity of this objection. The utter fallacy of all that Unitarians have ever said on this subject is easily detected. It consists in the strange folly of making the infinite and inscrutable Jehovah, in the modes

and conditions of his being, "altogether such a one as themselves." They confound time with eternity—the creature with the Creator—a being who is of the earth, earthy, with Him whose existence, in its modes and relations, is swallowed up and lost in the divine immensity and eternity of Him who is in all respects both infinite and everlasting. Could we for a moment suppose that father and son, when applied to the infinite and unsearchable God, mean in all respects precisely the same thing as they do when applied to human beings, such questions as the above might somewhat embarrass the subject; but as it is, they only reveal the pitiable imbecility or perverse folly of the objector, while no real difficulty is created. Trinitarians maintain that the Son of God, who again and again expressly declares himself "*the first and the last,*" is what he has been from the beginning, being as really and certainly from everlasting to everlasting as is the Father. In the beginning he was with God—he was God—and his existence no more began at any imaginary period in eternity than it began in time. "He proceeded forth and came from God." The manner of this divine procession we know not, hence we cannot state, much less illustrate, it; *nor is it in any way the object of our faith.* The

fact is clearly revealed, and revealed as having a necessary connection with the most important and vital doctrines of the Christian system. We therefore believe it, for the simple, and to us most satisfactory, reason, that God declares it. Respecting the passages which have been quoted, and others which in any way refer to the Father and the Son, they not only do not prove any natural inferiority of the Son, but assert for him a relation which implies an *equality* with God—a sameness of *nature* and *perfections*. So the Jews understood them, and so himself intended them to be understood. Hence, when he asserted that relation, “they sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but said that God was his Father,” (in the original, his own proper Father,) “*making himself* equal with God.” And instead of hinting that this was an erroneous inference from what he had said, he fully recognizes its legitimacy, and confirms their opinion that he claimed nothing less than perfect equality with the Father, by declaring that “*whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*” The same filial relation is asserted for himself by our Lord, in the tenth chapter of John, with a similar result, “Then the Jews took up stones to stone him,”



and assign the same reason for their violent opposition, which is given in the fifth chapter, "We stone thee for blasphemy, because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." The fact that he claimed to be God he tacitly admits—it could with no propriety be denied; and had he been, as they alledged, a man only, the accusation of blasphemy would have been fully sustained. But he again refutes the charge, by showing them that he was more than man. This was done by an appeal to his miracles: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the *Father is in me, and I in him*"—words equivalent to what he had told them before, "I and my Father are one."

III. "Because He spoke of the Father who sent him as the *only* true God: 'This is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' John xvii, 3."

These words have been variously translated.

1. That they might acknowledge thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, to be the only true God.

2. That they acknowledge thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, to be the *Messiah*.

3. That they might acknowledge thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ to be him whom thou hast sent.

All these the original will bear, as every Greek scholar knows; yet the passage is not equivocal or ambiguous. The several modes of expression, especially when taken in connection with other passages on the same subject, convey substantially the same meaning. What is here said of the true God is manifestly spoken of him in opposition to idols or false gods, and not in opposition to the Son, who is with equal clearness proclaimed "*the true God.*" 1 John v, 20.

IV. "Because Christ is the mediator between God and men. 1 Tim. ii, 5: 'For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.'"

This precious passage surely harmonizes beautifully with the views which have been given of our divine Immanuel. In his peculiar nature, in which the Godhead and manhood were joined, we see not only an adaptation or fitness for his office of mediator; but such a peculiarity of nature was quite necessary, that he might perform the work assigned him. It is true our ideas of his mediation may differ somewhat from those entertained by the Unita-

rians, and it remains to be seen which accord with the Scriptures. The mediator, in their esteem, is only a messenger sent from God to proclaim his readiness to forgive sin, and persuade men to cease their rebellion against him. The difference between the parties they do not believe to be mutual, and insist that the sole object had in view by the mediator, was to overcome the enmity and conciliate the favor of the rebellious creature. We grant that for such mediation a creature might be competent. But, in direct opposition to this, the Scriptures most plainly teach, that the rectoral justice of the Almighty had claims which must needs be satisfied; and that, to secure the ends of good government, and declare or make manifest the righteousness of God, it became necessary for the mediator, in his own person, to magnify the law and make it honorable—that he was the propitiation for our sins—that his sacrifice was offered, not to the sinner, which is strangely absurd, but to the offended Lawgiver. Hence the necessity that our mediator have “something to offer”—a price in his hands with which to redeem the captives. On the supposition that he was man only, the price he gave must have been a paltry consideration, compared *with the end* to be accomplished. But, being

God manifest in the flesh, he is just such a mediator as we need: his blood being "precious," and an infinite merit attached to his doing and suffering in our stead. This is clearly brought to light in the context, which it would have been hazardous for the Unitarian objector to quote. The words left out are, "*who gave himself a ransom for all*, to be testified in due time." Dare any man peril his reputation for even a tolerable knowledge of language, by venturing to assert that, to come in the character of a messenger, to inform men that they will be forgiven, if penitent; and to come in the character of a propitiatory sacrifice, and to accomplish the work by giving *himself a ransom for all*; mean the same thing? No; even those who urge the "argument" dare not do it. God declares that "*without the shedding of blood there is no remission.*" And atonement being required, the mediator must be able to make it, as a necessary condition—even the very first step toward effecting a reconciliation between God and man. This being the plain state of the case, neither man nor any other creature could approximate the requisite qualifications for a *mediator*. Enough has been said to show that this passage signally confutes the error it was quoted to sustain; but I have not

yet done with it: and there is no aspect in which we can view it, but it pleads powerfully for the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We can join the apostle in adoring gratitude and praise to Him through whom we have now received the atonement. That work is complete. He pronounced it finished when he bowed his head in death. But his mediation is still continued: he is yet our glorious Intercessor, our Advocate with God; and as such he ever liveth. Those who believe in his divinity, and see him before the throne, glorified with the glory he had with the Father before the world was, may reasonably have assurance that his prayers will prevail. He is ever worshiped as the Lamb that was slain; and the myriads, who veil their faces in his presence, cry, "Thou art worthy; for thou hast redeemed us unto God, out of every kindred, and people, and nation." But of what avail can the mediation of a mere creature be, one who died only as a martyr to the cause of truth? Can we trust our cause in his hands, while God has said, "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man?" As well might you join your prayers with those of the Virgin Mary, or any other departed saint; nay, with vastly more propriety; *for the Catholic* does not profess to rest in

these creature helpers, but to look through them to the efficacious mediation of a divine Saviour. If Unitarianism were a true representation of the gospel, the truly awakened sinner would still have occasion to say, in the bitterness of despair, "O that there was a daysman between me and God!"

V. Another text of similar import is gravely presented as an argument in favor of Unitarianism: "'Consider the . . . High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ.' The office of a priest is to minister to God. Christ, then, as high priest cannot be God."

The imaginary difficulty, which is here supposed to be thrown in our way, disappears before the distinguishing doctrine of the Bible; that while this great High Priest of our profession was verily God, he was also man—"God manifest in the flesh:" and, consequently, that there are essentially distinct persons in the divine subsistence, which exist, not indeed independently of each other; but in such related states, as fully to justify the ascription of their peculiar works to each: while, as before stated, the particular manner of that relation is not a subject of inquiry; and the very depth of the mystery rebukes the vain and unintelligible speculations of the curious.

A little attention might have convinced the caviling objector, that these "arguments," with which he attempts to assail the fortress of truth, can never be pressed into his service. When such weapons are hurled against our impregnable towers, they rebound with ruin to the assailant. Let us, in this case, again examine for a moment the connection, to see if the priesthood of Christ does not *imply*, rather than disprove, his divinity.

What is the office or duty of a priest? "To minister to God," replies our author. Thou hast well said. But *what* does he minister? The answer to this is from high authority. The priests under the law "offered both gifts and sacrifices." The altars at which they ministered were often smoking with the blood of slaughtered victims; but these could not take away sin. They were only figures of the true, typical representations of the divinely appointed and only atoning Sacrifice. And not only the immediate connection, but the whole Epistle to the Hebrews, is full of references to the *sacrifice of our High Priest*—so much so, that many advocates of Unitarianism have been led to question its authenticity. In the second chapter we read of his incarnation, and learn the *object contemplated*: "That he might be a

merciful and faithful high priest in *things pertaining to God*, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." From this it appears, that the part of his work which related to God, was, to make reconciliation or satisfaction for the sins of the people. This, surely, savors but little of the strange notion, that the only reconciliation required was on the part of men. Language could not be framed to teach more positively, that the great work performed by our High Priest was propitiatory, and had respect rather to the offended, than to the guilty offender. "In things pertaining to God" he exercised himself, that the honor of the Creator might be secured ; his worship regulated ; his laws enforced ; his justice and his truth vindicated : while yet the sceptre of mercy is extended to the condemned, but repentant sinner.

The subsequent context is, if possible, a still stronger assertion that our High Priest was God as well as man. Look at it. "He was counted worthy of more glory than Moses." How much more ? as much as one creature can excel another ? Nay, verily ; but "inasmuch as *he* which hath *builded* the house hath more honor than the *house*. For every house is builded by some man ; but he that built all things is God." Here, then, is a High Priest as much superior to Moses

as the Creator is to the creature—one who made all things that are made; while the apostles declare that he who did so is God. How can we resist the conclusion that the person characterized is God? Indeed there is reason to fear that they who quote this passage to prove the inferiority of Christ, have little heed the apostle's exhortation to "*consider the Priest of our profession.*" Kind reader, know him not, allow me to commend to you the almighty Saviour. O pause a little, and consider him, before you blindly refuse to worship and honor the Son, even as you honor the Father.

VI. The next reason given for denying the divinity of the Saviour is, "Because the head of Christ is God: 'I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the church, the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.' 1 Cor. xi, 3."

It would, perhaps, be quite sufficient to serve that, whatever this passage may mean, it cannot possibly mean what the "argument" on it supposes; for if the fact that "the head of Christ is God," proves the essential inferiority of his nature, and that he belongs to an entirely different order of beings; the fact that "the head of the church is the man," would of course prove the essential inferiority of woman, and th

belonged to an entirely different order of beings : and as in the other case the difference is supposed to be vast—wide as the immeasurable distance between the finite creature and the infinite Creator—I know not how greatly this Unitarian “argument” would degrade a portion of the community below their lordly superiors. The tendency of such interpretations of Scripture would be heathenish in the extreme, and if practically carried out might induce a state of things illy accordant with the regulations of Christian society.

It is painful to be under the necessity of noticing such attempts to bewilder and mislead the unwary. Were it not lamentably true that the human heart drinks in error so readily that even the most puerile efforts have some influence, I would need an apology for copying this Unitarian proof text. But now that the passage is before us, it becomes proper to inquire what it does mean so far as the character of Christ is referred to.

The apostle does not assert a natural inferiority either of the woman to the man, or of Christ to God, but is speaking particularly of Christianity and its ordinances. The constitution of society in general, and of the church in particular, implies the existence of authority vested some-

where; and where there is the right of authority, there must of necessity rest on others a corresponding obligation, or duty of submission and obedience. In the social state, so far as government is concerned, the precedence is given to the husband and father. The reasons for this arrangement are sufficiently apparent; and even if they were less so, it would be the duty of the wife to be in subjection, inasmuch as this is God's appointment. But, lest any should suppose this arrangement is to the disparagement of the female sex, the apostle guards against this inference from what he had said, by asserting the mutual dependence and natural equality of the sexes in these words: "Neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord." The headship of the man is no proof of her inferiority, but leaves her still at his side as an equal, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. Then alluding to the higher mysteries—of the relations subsisting between the different persons of the holy Trinity—he presents the Father as the head, the fountain of authority. He sends his Son his only-begotten Son, to redeem us; while the Son responds to the appointment, saying, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I *delight to do thy will, O God.*" In this sense

“the head of Christ is God;” a sense which implies *natural equality*, but official subordination and obedience, voluntarily rendered by One “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.”

VII. Another argument for Unitarianism is stated thus: “Because in the same sense in which we are said to belong to Christ, Christ himself is said to belong to God.” 1 Cor. iii, 23.

On this I remark, that if reference be made to the human nature of Christ only, that as really belongs to God as the soul and body of any other man; but if his higher nature be included, it belongs to, or is of, God only as his unspeakable gift. The assertion that Christ belongs to God in the *same sense* that we belong to Christ, is without the shadow of authority, either in this passage or anywhere else in the Bible. On the contrary, the plainest facts of revelation show that we belong to Christ in a very different sense. We are his, not only by creation, but by purchase—he “bought us with a price;” and, to the true believer in his name, there is peculiar power in the conclusion which is predicated on that fact: “*Ye are not your own*”—you of right belong to Him who redeemed you, “not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with his own precious blood.” And is it possible that the whole

"Unitarian Association," who are flooding the country with these "one hundred arguments," have gone so far? Will they not stop with tearing the crown of divinity from our Saviour's head, but intimate that he too was lost, and, like us, redeemed; and that, being bought with a price, "he belongs to God in the *same sense that we belong to him?*" Gracious Redeemer, immaculate Son of God, forgive the impiety of those who thus traduce thee!

VIII. The next argument stands thus: "Because Christ says, 'My Father is greater than all,' is he, then, not greater than the Son? And in another connection he affirms without the least qualification, 'My Father is greater than I.' John x, 29; xiv, 28."

To me these passages seem as plain, as they are full of divine encouragement. The connection shows, beyond controversy, that these words were designed to assure believers of their safety in the Refuge they had sought. There would be efforts made to destroy them; but, abiding in Christ, greater is he that is for them, than all they that can be against them. Hence the promise, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father is greater than all," &c. Is it not strange that *any man, of even tolerable sense, should suppose*

that Christ himself is included in the "*all*" who were fruitlessly laboring to pluck his sheep out of the Father's hand, just as if there was a violent antagonism between them with regard to the safety of the sheep? The supposition is in the highest degree absurd, and could be made only by one thoroughly committed to the defense of a false and unscriptural doctrine. The text simply declares that God is able to baffle all the designs of our most subtil and powerful enemies, and consequently that they who fear him are safe—they need fear nothing else. The attempt to press this text into the service of Unitarianism must fail, even if our attention could be confined to the twenty-ninth verse, with which the advocates for that system always find it convenient to close the quotation. But the next words seal its doom for ever. Let us read them in connection, as the evangelist has them recorded: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one"—not one in person, or one in purpose: the English does not read so, nor will the original bear that meaning, but asserts emphatically that they are *one*—one in *nature*, *one* in the possession of all the attributes of the Godhead, and *one* in performing the godlike

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To me these passages seem as plain, as they are full of divine encouragement. The connection shows, beyond controversy, that these words were designed to assure believers of their safety in the Refuge they had sought. There would be efforts made to destroy them; but, abiding in Christ, greater is he that is for them, than all they that can be against them. Hence the promise, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father is greater than all," &c. Is it not strange that *any man, of even tolerable sense, should suppose*

that Christ himself is included in the "*all*" who were fruitlessly laboring to pluck his sheep out of the Father's hand, just as if there was a violent antagonism between them with regard to the safety of the sheep? The supposition is in the highest degree absurd, and could be made only by one thoroughly committed to the defense of a false and unscriptural doctrine. The text simply declares that God is able to baffle all the designs of our most subtil and powerful enemies, and consequently that they who fear him are safe—they need fear nothing else. The attempt to press this text into the service of Unitarianism must fail, even if our attention could be confined to the twenty-ninth verse, with which the advocates for that system always find it convenient to close the quotation. But the next words seal its doom for ever. Let us read them in connection, as the evangelist has them recorded: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one"—not one in person, or one in purpose: the English does not read so, nor will the original bear that meaning, but asserts emphatically that they are *one*—one in *nature*, *one* in the possession of all the attributes of the Godhead, and *one* in performing the godlike

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works which had been wrought. In this way, it is evident, he was understood at the time, and so he intended they should understand him. But how is this view reconciled with the other declaration, "My Father is greater than I?" It certainly requires no very great ability to do this. It has been before said that, in his character as Messiah, Christ was sent by the Father, and came to do his will. This implies an official inferiority, or subordination, but no more. In thousands of instances, as everybody knows, the ambassadors or persons sent possess not only the same essential nature with him who sends them, but often possess superior endowments; yet they are under authority, and the person in whom that authority is lodged must be in some sense greater than they. But what consummate folly it would be to infer any inferiority of their nature from the simple fact of their office or mission! Besides, our divine Mediator is often spoken of with special reference to his manhood—the nature he assumed or took upon him. In respect to this he might say, "My Father is greater than I;" while touching his higher nature he claims, "I and my Father are one."

IX. Take now another "argument." The writer rejects the divinity of Christ, "because *he virtually denies that he is God, when he*

exclaims, 'Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, that is, God.' Matt. xix, 17."

It is hardly necessary to refer the reader to the sharp controversy which has been maintained concerning the various readings of this passage; in which it has been made to appear that many of the most ancient manuscripts and versions give a reading which entirely cuts off the inference that Unitarians have ever been eager to draw from it, as found in the common version. The weight of the arguments on either side would hardly be appreciated by the common reader, if given. The result of the controversy is this:—The most learned Unitarians in Europe now look for little or no aid for their cause from this source; while *Griesbach*, one of the greatest critics, and certainly not biased by any partiality for the orthodox doctrine, felt obliged, by the weight of evidence, to adopt this reading in his New Testament.

But suppose we admit the present English text to be essentially correct, what then? Does it follow that the argument against the divinity of Christ, based on it, is conclusive? By no means. To show its fallacy, attention must be given to the condition and views of the young man to whom the question was addressed. The manner of his approach shows that he evidently

considered our Lord only as a prophet, a "good Teacher," and not as the divine Messiah. He seems to have thought him capable, like the rabbins of his nation, of being influenced by high titles, and the language of compliment.

On this account Christ mildly reproves him for his adulation; and intimates that such language, improperly addressed to man, ought to be reserved for God alone. The title, "good Master," if rejected at all, (of which there is no evidence,) was rejected, not because it was not *applicable* to the person addressed, but rather because his omniscient eye discovered that it was improperly applied by one who regarded him only as a man. Had the same title been given him by one who recognized his proper character, there is no reason to suppose that it would not have been acknowledged with approbation, but the contrary; inasmuch as he himself said once and again, "I am the good Shepherd," a title which, taken in the connection where it is used, is quite as lofty as "good Master, or Teacher." Thus it appears that the confident assertion so often made, that "Christ himself disclaimed divine prerogatives when ascribed to him, is without any foundation."

The point of the question is obvious; it directed the attention of the young nobleman to

an inconsistency between the language he had employed, and his own unworthy and inadequate notions of the person whom he addressed.

In like manner when Unitarians and Arians, to show that they have cast off the odious shackles of creeds and confessions, boast of Christ as their great Teacher, unerring in wisdom, and infallible in all his instructions, applying to him august titles which approximate, if they do not imply, the true account of his glorious character, we may demand of them, "Gentlemen, why do ye so? Beware lest ye rob God by attributing his perfections to one whom ye acknowledge only as a man, or, at most, a creature infinitely less than God."

X. "Because the Father is called the God of Christ, as he is the God of Christians: 'Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.' John xx, 17."

That Christ as man claimed the eternal Father for his God, is certainly true. But that the Father is the God of Christ, the divine Messiah, in *the same sense* that he is the God of Christians, is not true; nor is it asserted or implied in the passage quoted.

XI. The next passage is introduced thus: "Because an inspired apostle says of God, in

distinction from the Lord Jesus Christ, that he is the only potentate—that he only hath immortality. 1 Tim. vi, 15.”

This argument was probably intended for those who do not consult the living oracles for themselves with much care, and, consequently, can be imposed on by garbled quotations. The important member of the sentence, “King of kings, and Lord of lords,” is left out entirely. Why? I know no reason, unless it was because those titles were known to be especially appropriated to Christ by his inspired servant; thus determining the reference here to be especially to Him who “hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, *Lord of lords, and King of kings.*” Rev. xvii, 14; xix, 16. It is hard to imagine on what ground any one can suppose that “the only Potentate” is distinguished from our Lord Jesus Christ, when in both the places referred to the same descriptive titles are applied expressly to him; and still more, when the apostle describes his “appearing in his own times,” referred to in a preceding verse, as the appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ. Titus ii, 13. The truth is, no such distinction of persons is at all intimated; *but throughout the whole paragraph the God-*

head is adored in language of inimitable sublimity; and these predicates of glorious majesty and power are properly attributed to the Deity, whether the person of the Father, of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, be mentioned, or all together are contemplated as united in the one living and true God. At the appearing of our Lord to judge the quick and the dead, this God will show (in distinction from all false gods, and to the eternal confusion of their worshippers) who is the only and blessed Potentate, the Lord of lords and King of kings." "To whom be honor and power everlasting." Amen.

XII. "Because it is the express declaration of the apostle, that the Father is the *one* God, and there is *none other*: 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' 1 Cor. viii, 6."

This asserts the unity of the Godhead in opposition to idols. If orthodox Christians worshiped a plurality of gods, this passage, and, indeed, a great portion of the Bible, would lie against their system of doctrines and worship. But they do no such thing. They have faith in the "Three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost;" and on the same authority believe that these dis-

tinct, though inseparable persons, are one God. The first clause, then, presents no difficulty. The latter clause of the sixth verse is supposed to be against the essential divinity of Christ, by representing him not as the primary, but the intermediate cause of all things. That God the Father was in some sense the fountain of all being, I have before shown to be in beautiful harmony with the natural and essential equality of the Son. The same is recognized by the apostle in this place. But the notion that the Son was only an "intermediate cause," the agent, or rather the instrument, by which all things were created, is as derogatory to his character as it is unauthorized by the sacred record. The plain doctrine of Scripture is, that the Son was the *actual* and *efficient* cause of all things. I do not say the sole cause, for, in their works of infinite wisdom and almighty power, neither was the Son without the Father, nor the Father without the Son.

A more particular analysis of the words might be given, but it is scarcely necessary. Others, alas! worship they know not what; but to us there is one God, the Father, self-existent, fountain of all being, in whom we live and move, and are; and one Lord Jesus Christ not inferior in nature, but essentially equal and *one with the Father*. He is the only visib'

governor of the world and the church, by whom we live the life of faith and hope; through whom, as our Redeemer, we are bought, enlightened, pardoned, and saved. Reader, though despised and rejected of men, "*He is thy God; and worship thou him. O deny him not, lest he also deny thee before the Father and his holy angels!*" "*Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little.*" "*Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*"

XIII. Another reason assigned for denying the divinity of Christ is, "Because the power he possessed was, as he himself affirmed, given to him: '*All power is given unto me.*' Matt. xxxviii, 18."

From this it is inferred that almighty power did not belong to Christ by nature. But it should be observed that "all power," in this and similar connections, does not refer to *omnipotence* as an attribute or essential perfection of the divine nature, but rather to the immediate and visible exercise of that glorious attribute. If the former were intended, which this Unitarian argument supposes, it would necessarily follow that the Father, having divested himself of this essential attribute, (for it was all given,) ceased to be God. But that "all power," in the second sense, namely, that

of prerogative to create and govern, is given and received, argues nothing at all against the natural equality of the persons between whom the transaction takes place. Giving power, in this sense, does not necessarily imply even official, and much less natural, superiority. It may mean only the committing, or surrendering, from one to another the immediate and actual exercise of what was a common prerogative; in which exertion of power both are concerned, while one alone becomes the visible agent, or doer of the work. It need scarcely be said that this is the common view of the subject variously presented in the Holy Scriptures. When they ascribe the work of creation and other acts of infinite power to the Son, the apostles and evangelists do not exclude the agency of the Father and the Holy Spirit. They do not break in on the unity of the Godhead, or divide the essence of the Deity, while they do most clearly distinguish the divine persons. In all he did and taught, the wisdom of our Immanuel was his own wisdom; the power he exerted, his own power; the works he wrought, his own works; while he ever connects his wisdom and power with the wisdom and power of the Father. In a word, creation was *the work of God without distinction of persons;*

but in the execution of this stupendous work, the only-begotten Son, "in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," was the immediate and prominent agent in wielding the energy of the whole divine nature.

But having shown that these last and ever-memorable words of our heavenly Master are not against his claims to essential divinity, they must not be dismissed without some notice of their testimony in favor of that important article of our faith.

Here our chief difficulty in disposing of the passage satisfactorily commences. The text itself, the connection in which it stands, and the peculiar circumstances under which it was uttered, present so many considerations which bear witness to his true character, that it is hard to decide what most deserves to be noticed.

"All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." Here our Lord asserts his universal dominion. It is absolute, and comprehends angels, men, and devils. Nor is he possessed only of a temporary authority, but "his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endureth throughout all generations. His utmost authority shall at length be acknowledged, even by those who have most rebelliously struggled against it. Willingly, or by constraint; won by

his love, or awed by his power ; at his name every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Here He speaks with authority. In his own name he commands alike the obedience of his ministers, and the faith of the nations to whom he now sends them to preach his gospel. The prerogative assumed is specially predicated on his almighty power. Being God over all, he could of right prescribe the terms on which sinners might be pardoned, and command his servants to make them known to every creature.

He next enjoins baptism to be administered, a sacrament in which the believer makes his public profession of faith in God ; and the formula given distinctly recognizes the fact that the glorious object of our worship reveals himself to man as uniting the three persons, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," in the indivisible unity of the Godhead.

1. In view of these facts, I ask, Did not Jesus Christ, by positively asserting his unlimited power over all things, declare also his essential *oneness* with the Father ?

2. *Does not the authoritative manner of*

Christ in appointing his ministers show the assumption of greater power than can belong to any creature?

3. Can it be that Christians are to be baptized into the name of another than the supreme God? Who would have the impiety thus to rob God, by publicly, and in the most solemn manner, consecrating himself to the service of a creature? To us it seems plain that the command to baptize in the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost fully establishes their equality with the Father. They who deny this, of course receive and administer baptism in the name of the Father, whom they consider God, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, regarded by them only as "an influence," "a breath;" or, as some say, "gust of wind;" and in the name of the Son, whom they consider "a man," "a creature," "a superangelic being," and I know not what else the imagination may suggest. Is this answering the requisition of the great Head of the church? Let any man of common sense, who reads the Scriptures, decide.

XIV. An argument based on another class of texts, the author states thus: "Because *He* positively denies himself to be the author of his works, but refers them to the Father or the Holy Spirit of God. They were neither done

in his own name nor did they bear witness to his own power: 'The Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.' John xiv, 10. 'I cast out devils by the Spirit of God.' Matt. xii, 28."

John v, 36, and x, 25, are also frequently quoted to prove the same position. But the attempt to make either of these passages witness against the highest claims of our Lord must be utterly vain; and its pitiable weakness is exposed by a simple reference to the fact, already and abundantly established, that the different persons of the Godhead subsist in *essential unity*—a unity so real and perfect, that what is done by one, is, in some sense, done by all, and what is done to one, is done to all. The Scriptures abound with proof of this. Take one other instance, not before presented. Acts v, 3: "Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost?" Verse 4: "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Verse 9: "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?" From this it is evident that the "Holy Ghost, God, and the Spirit of the Lord," are all one. What reason is there then for the assumption, that when Christ is said to have cast out devils by the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of *the Lord*, he denied himself to be the author of

the miracles he wrought? No reason, absolutely none at all. On the contrary, had any heed been given to the connection from which the first passage is wrested, it would have rebuked and confounded the too confident assertor of false doctrine. The reader is requested to turn to John xiv, 8-11, and read the whole, noticing particularly the answer given to Peter's request to see the Father: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Thus He in substance says to Philip, "What! after so long a time, and so many advantages, art thou still ignorant of my real character, as the divine Messiah, God manifest in the flesh? Knowest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself." Then follow the words which are brought to prove the inferiority of Christ: "The Father which dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Verily this proof text is found in strange company. "The Father doeth the works," it is true. But how? Let Christ himself explain: "I am in the Father, and the Father in me;" we are in nature essentially *one*; so that "he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father—and all things whatsoever the Father

doeth, these doeth the Son likewise." Does not such language prove, beyond a doubt, that he who might lawfully and with propriety use it was no other than the true God and Creator of all things? Can it be said of any creature, that he doeth the very same things, and *all things*, that are done by the eternal God? And Christ having plainly asserted this of himself, either was not a creature, or, as such, is chargeable with the strangest presumption and impiety.

The assertion, frequently made with great boldness, that "the works of Christ were neither done in his own name, nor do they witness his own power," is without proof, and false. The works of God which he performed, proved his divine mission, and showed the Father's glory—but they did more: they revealed his own almighty power. The testimony of John is, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus, and manifested forth *his* glory; and his disciples believed on him." He cured the sick of the palsy, expressly to show the people that *he* had power on earth to forgive sins. Matt. ix, 6. And it is to his great power that his apostles and believers, even to the end of the world, look for aid and shelter in all the severe trials they are called to suffer: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather

glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. xii, 9.

Other testimony might be presented in great abundance, which would be equally pointed; but enough has been given to rebuke the folly of a position so entirely unauthorized by the words quoted to sustain it; and shown to be false by the whole tenor of Scripture. The manifest power of Christ was a favorite theme with the apostles. With it they connect all the exceeding great and precious promises of his gospel; believing, with steadfast confidence, that in all their perils he is able to save to the uttermost. Peter's testimony is so pertinent, that I introduce it here, not to disprove a false statement, which merits no further notice, but rather to show his concurrence with the other witnesses that have been called to establish the fact of Christ's divine power and glory. He addresses his second epistle to those who had obtained like precious faith, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; and prays that grace and peace may be multiplied unto them, "*through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.*" But, Peter, is there not

some mistake here? Are you quite sure that your Master and Lord possessed "*divine power*," that which everybody knows belongs only to the infinite Godhead? Yes, he responds; we know whereof we affirm: "for we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." 2 Peter i, 16.

The other assertion, that "the works of Christ were not done in his own name," is equally far from being true. That he sometimes appeals to the name and authority of the Father, to show that his mission was divine, is admitted; but to say that this was their only design, is to take a very limited and partial view of "all the mighty works that do show forth themselves in him." Many of his godlike acts were performed to reveal the personal dignity of his nature, and they are "written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God." The former title being his official name; the latter his divine designation, and implying essential equality with the Father. With the exception of only a few instances, in which he seemed called on to show that he was not without the presence and approbation of the Father, *all his miracles* were wrought not in the name

of any other, but in his *own* name. His style and bearing are not those of a mere ambassador or servant. His language is that of supreme authority: "He rebuked the fever, and it left her." To the winds and waves he said, "Peace, be still." To the unclean spirit, "*I* command thee to depart out of him;" and to the dead, "*I* say unto thee, Arise." Did ever a prophet of the old, or an apostle of the new dispensation, assume such authority as this? Never.

If further proof were needed that the power of working miracles was, in Christ, an *original* power, we have it in the fact that he himself bestowed that power on his disciples, and gave it as his own: "Behold, I give unto you power," &c. Luke x, 19. "And *he* gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases." Luke ix, 1. But in all this did he not simply act as God's envoy, authorizing them to work miracles in the Father's name? Not so. The apostles uniformly wrought their miracles in the name of Christ, their divine Master; and the *power* by which they were wrought is expressly ascribed to him. "*In my name* cast out devils," was a part of the commission he gave them; and Peter rehearses the notable miracle of healing he performed on the *impotent man*, by ascribing the power directly to

his crucified, but risen, Saviour; uniting with the account a strong testimony to his supreme divinity. To the Jews he said, "Ye denied the *Holy One*"—"and killed the Prince of life"—while "His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know." Add to this, that our Lord himself speaks of sending the Holy Spirit, in the language of one who had an original right, an inherent power, to bestow that wonderful gift which was to impart miraculous energies and heavenly wisdom, comfort, and purity, to human minds. Does the Father send the Spirit? the Son claims the same power: "The Comforter whom I will send unto you." That holy Comforter is, on this account, called both the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God; the giving of the Spirit being indifferently ascribed to the Father and to the Son. But when that same gift is *mediately* and *instrumentally* bestowed on others by the apostles, no such language is used by them: they pray to Christ, waiting for the fulfillment of his gracious promise; and when the Spirit came down in great power, like a rushing mighty wind, they direct the attention of the astonished multitude to their ascended Lord, saying, "*He* hath shed forth this which ye see and hear."

And yet with all these facts on record, and many more like them, there are found men who, to save the theory to the defense of which they are committed, tell us that "all the miracles of Christ, and those of his apostles, were only intended to declare the Father's glory, and were always wrought in his name." For such statements we have no apology; and the intelligent reader has but to examine them to be thoroughly satisfied that they are neither wise nor true.

XV. A similar objection is based on the alleged fact, that "Christ declares that he is not the author of his own doctrine: 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me'—'As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.' John vii, 16; viii, 28."

These words seem to have been spoken to draw the attention of the Jews from their traditions, the teachings of men, to the words of authority with which he spoke; and their obvious meaning is, that the doctrine he taught was not his only, or in such sense as to exclude the Father: because of their essential and inseparable union, the works of Christ are the works of God, and his words are the words of God.

XVI. The following language is brought to

prove the inferiority of Christ: "I seek not mine own glory; but I honor my Father—if I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me." John viii, 49, 50, 54.

If those who think they see any plausibility in this attempt to turn the words of Christ ~~against~~ his claims as a divine person, will take the trouble to open to the place where they are found, and arrange the clauses in their natural order, (they are not so in the quotation,) and *supply what is left out*, they will find no difficulty in the passage. The chapter, both before and after the words selected from it, contains several plain allusions to the intimate union subsisting between the Father and the Son, in will, in doctrine, and in deed. At these the Jews were greatly offended, because he being, as they supposed, a man, made himself God. Hence they reproach him, saying, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil. Jesus answered, I have not a devil, but honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me." As if he had said, My claims, lofty as they are, detract nothing from the honor that belongs to the Father; for, though distinct in person, we have an essential and inseparable unity of nature. If I were a self-seeking impostor, as ye suppose, and *honored myself by invading the rights of the Father,*

my honor is nothing; it is my Father that honoreth me:" and my honor is *his* honor, for we are one. Then he still more positively asserts his eternity; that he had existence from everlasting; was known and adored by the patriarch: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then they took up stones and cast at him." Why did they do so?

XVII. "Because He affirms that he had not the disposal of the highest places in his own kingdom: 'To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.' Matt. xx, 23."

If this passage really affirmed what is predicated on it, in this argument for Unitarianism, it would seem to imply some kind of inferiority on the part of the Son. It would simply declare, that, in his official character as Redeemer and Mediator, he did not claim the prerogative in question. But even this *official* inferiority is not taught in the text, nor did he ever make any peculiarly strange acknowledgment, that he had not the disposal of the highest places in his own kingdom." Let it be observed, that the words "*it shall* be given," are not the words of Christ, but were inserted by the translators, to supply what they supposed an ellipsis.

Hence they print them, as is usual in such cases, in Italic characters. The original, as every Greek scholar, who has looked at the passage, must know, is literally translated thus: "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." This makes the sense obvious. The plain meaning is simply this:—Christ asserts that the principles on which the honors of his eternal kingdom—there is no reference to orders or degrees in the ministry of the militant church—will be bestowed, are fixed; and they allow of no favoritism, such as the request made for the two brothers seemed to imply. Between the persons of the ever-blessed Trinity there is a perfect consent, and the laws by which they will distribute the rewards of heaven are revealed: "If any man serve me," says our Lord, "him will my Father honor." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." In this just distribution of rewards there will be no respect of persons; but the most holy, zealous, self-sacrificing, and efficient, "who have turned

many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." They who, influenced by the love of Christ, in this way seek for glory, honor, and immortality, are sure to obtain the prize; it is prepared for them: while those who have no better ground of hope than the fond imagination that they are the chosen favorites of Heaven, will be disappointed.

XIX. "Because He expressly disclaims the possession of the attribute of *omniscience*: 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but my Father only.'"

This text has already been fully explained; and I will only add here, that the language, rightly interpreted, does *not*, either "expressly" or by fair construction, disclaim the attribute of omniscience. He who uttered it approved the noble confession of his disciples, when they said, "*Now we are sure that thou knowest all things.*"

XX. The next argument worthy of a brief notice is this: "Christ is said in the Scriptures to have been tempted of the devil; but God cannot be tempted: therefore Christ cannot be God, or essentially divine."

If our Lord himself were present, and would condescend to answer an objection so groundless, he might say to those who bring it, "Ye

do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures ;" not remembering, that, with respect to his human nature, it behooved the Redeemer of men to be made like unto his brethren ; that he, their merciful and faithful High Priest, "having himself suffered, being tempted, might be able also to succor them that are tempted."

XXI. Another argument against the divinity of Christ is supposed to be found in the fact, that "he prayed and besought the Father to glorify him." Several passages are quoted on this subject ; and the conclusion is drawn with an air of triumph, that "the being who thus prayed to God cannot be God."

It seems scarcely necessary to notice such unworthy attempts to disparage and overthrow a most precious gospel doctrine ; and believing that it is hardly possible for any who love and seek the truth to be misled by it, I will pass on with the simple remark, that when "the Word was made flesh ;" when the Lord of glory took upon him the seed of Abraham ; in that assumed nature it was quite befitting for him to pray and perform other acts of religious worship. But the very prayer he offered proves his supreme divinity. It was such a petition as no creature could with any propriety utter. He seeks a *return of his own former glory* : "The glory I

had with thee before the world was ;” that is, “from the beginning, when he was with God, and was God.” There is a degree of impiety in this “argument” that we were hardly prepared to expect. It is the attempt of a poor sinner to deny and degrade the “Lord that bought him” to a mere creature, *because* in the extreme agony of his vicarious sufferings, when the iniquities of us all were laid upon him, his soul, his perfect human soul, became exceeding sorrowful, and shrank from the bitter cup which his infinite compassion prompted him to take and drink. Yet it is not new. Even in the days of his flesh, the enemies who rejected his claims to divinity, in like manner sought to justify their stupid unbelief by an appeal to his apparent helplessness, under the terrible load he bore: “Passing by, they also reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, *Save thyself*: if thou be the *Son of God*, come down from the cross, and we will believe.”

XXII. “Christ never instructed his disciples to worship himself, but the Father, and the Father only: ‘When ye pray, say, Our Father, which art in heaven.’ ‘In that day ye shall ask me nothing.’”

It is enough to remark, that if there is any truth in the declaration, “*I and my Father are*

one," prayer directed to the Father certainly does not exclude the Son. And the propriety of addressing prayer to the Father, in the name of Christ as Saviour and Mediator, all orthodox churches allow, while as God they worship him; and we have before seen that his disciples, and all the primitive Christians, did the same.

XXIII. "It is expressly said that it is to the *glory of the Father* that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord."

I copy this not from any fear that even the most credulous will think it a valid reason for rejecting the proper divinity of Christ; but because it is a pointed and Scriptural answer to the most serious objection brought against paying supreme religious honors to him. It seems the Jews had accused the early Christians of drawing away the people from the worship of the Father by paying what they thought idolatrous homage to Christ. But Paul manifestly regarded the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as so inseparably united that all would be equally honored in homage paid to either. Hence, he exults in the promise, that every knee shall bow, and tongue confess, that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

XXIV. "An apostle speaks of Christ only as

the *image* of God: 'Who is the image of the invisible God;' and it would be absurd to call any one his own image."

The words may be found in Col. i, 15; and the same sentiment is more fully expressed in Heb. i, 3: "Who being the brightness of his [the Father's] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things," &c. The apostle continues, to the end of the chapter, variously, and in the strongest possible manner, asserting the supreme divinity of his Lord and Master. Mr. Watson's exposition of the third verse is so lucid and satisfactory that I copy it:—

"'The brightness of his glory' is a phrase in which allusion is made to a luminous body which is made visible by its own effulgence. The Father is compared to the original fountain of light, and the Son to the effulgence or body of rays proceeding from it. Thus we are taught that the essence of both is the same: that the one is inseparable from, and cannot be conceived of without, the other; consequently, that neither of them ever was or could be alone."

XXV. "Unitarians reject the doctrine of Christ's divinity because he is declared to be the 'first-born of every creature,' and 'the

beginning of the creation of God.' Col. i, 15; Rev. iii, 14."

The passages are similar in expression, and assert nearly the same thing. Their plain meaning is, that He of whom they speak was before every creature, and not, certainly, as the Unitarian argument implies, that every creature produced him as its first-born. If it be said that God created him first, and then by him created all things else, it is enough to reply, that such a notion is entirely inconsistent with the immediate context, to say nothing of a multitude of other passages. It is there distinctly stated that he not only created all things visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, but they were created *for* him. This accords well with the declaration, that he was before all things, that he was the beginning, the original, or first cause of the creation of God; but can never be reconciled with the unscriptural and absurd supposition that He by whose word of power the worlds were made was himself a created being.

XXVI. "Unitarians reject the divinity of Christ because he is spoken of in Scripture as 'the first-born among many brethren;' and says *that* 'whosoever will do the will of my Father,

the same is my brother.' Rom. viii, 29; Matt. xii, 20. Has God brethren?"

This impious interrogatory argues a very contracted view of the compass of language, and still less critical knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Jesus was the first-begotten from the dead; his body was the first-fruits of the resurrection, the earnest of what was secured to men, whom he had redeemed by his own death. As to the other passage, which ought to have been quoted in full, a child should know that the words cannot be taken in a strictly literal sense, and were never so intended. To suppose so is to maintain the absurdity, that every man who obeys God is literally not only a "brother," but a "sister and mother," to Christ. The true meaning is both plain and precious. Our Lord simply declares that the willing and obedient servants of God are as dear to him as his nearest relatives according to the flesh, however much these were beloved.

XXVII. "Unitarians reject," &c, "because it is affirmed of Christ that 'when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject to Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.' 1 Cor. xv, 28."

This text has doubtless occasioned some dif-

ficulty to many honest inquirers after the truth, and is confessedly less plain than most passages on which we have been called to make any comment. But though it may be quite impossible for us now to explain or comprehend its full meaning, because there seems to be some allusion to the *manner* of the divine existence, which is necessarily incomprehensible, of one thing we may be absolutely certain:—there is nothing here at all contrary to the numerous testimonies that have been presented, some of which plainly assert, and others surely imply, the essential *equality* and oneness of the Father and the Son. Nor can that which is surrendered include the entire dominion of the Son, for his “*throne is for ever and for ever ;*” “his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion shall endure throughout all generations.” Having carefully considered the passage in its connection, I will state briefly what I now suppose it does mean. “The kingdom” spoken of is the kingdom of grace, including all those grand and affecting displays of divine favor manifested in redeeming and saving lost sinners. Christ, as man and mediator, is the rightful Lord and Sovereign of this kingdom, having sole authority both to *institute its laws*, and distribute rewards and punishment. When the whole is accomplished, at, or

mediately subsequent to, the general judgment, as there will be no more occasion for the separate exercise of power, he will cease to hold a distinct dominion;—the power which had been surrendered to him will revert again to the divided and indivisible Godhead; while the purified human nature of the Messiah shall itself become subject to Him who put all things under him, that God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, existing in perfect unity, may be all and in all. This does not affect, or at all destroy, the distinction of persons in the glorious Trinity. The Scriptures represent that distinction as an essential element of the divine nature, something that was before the incarnation, and will exist eternally.

Thus I have noticed, perhaps at more length than they deserved, these “Scripture arguments” which are supposed to rear a strong bulwark of defense around the system they are sought to support. It must be evident to all who will examine them carefully, that the aid which Unitarianism derives from these passages is only imaginary. Rightly interpreted, they are all turned against that system, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

It is a very common thing for those who attempt to prove any false doctrine by testimony

from the Bible, to proceed in their work by taking detached sentences and parts of sentences, with an utter disregard of the connection where they are found. These, in their isolated state, and with no clew to the meaning of some peculiar phraseology they may contain, often make an impression, on persons but partially acquainted with Biblical subjects, adverse to the truths they were intended to communicate. Other passages, having little or no relevancy to the subject, are introduced with a constructive rendering, and made, if possible, to contribute something to the object; and the argument concluded with some bold assertion about the number of texts that might be brought to prove the position. Such is peculiarly the character of the tracts and other small publications, which are circulated widely through the country, for the purpose of teaching the peculiarities of Unitarian theology. Having read these publications extensively, I am obliged to concede one point, and that too on which much dependence seems to be placed: It is certainly true, that many passages of Scripture can be quoted to prove their system; the pertinency of their application is another question. This was not thought *very important*, as a formidable array of texts, *whether exactly to the point or not*, would be

likely to have some influence, especially when accompanied with a sufficient amount of confident declamation. I have before me several specimens of this kind of argument. One asserts that there are thirteen thousand passages in the New Testament in which the word God occurs, of which it is said that not one of them implies the existence of more than one person in the Godhead.

It probably did not occur to the sage reasoner that his argument is good for nothing, even if he could increase the number a hundred fold, while there are many other places that do plainly teach the deity of the Son and the Holy Ghost.

If the simple fact that any number of passages are found where the name of the supreme Being is given, and no distinction of persons is formally made only because the subject and the connection did not furnish occasion for such distinction, is to be taken as evidence against the doctrine of the trinity, almost any doctrine of revealed religion can be disproved in the same way. All the attributes essential to the divine existence might with equal propriety be denied, because the name of God is often mentioned without special allusion to them separately.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

UNITARIANISM EXAMINED, AND ITS DISTINGUISHING DOCTRINES SHOWN TO BE AS UNREASONABLE AS THEY ARE UNSCRIPTURAL.

IN the foregoing pages, after a brief statement and defense of the doctrines of the cross, we examined the arguments usually employed in opposing the faith of the orthodox church, and discovered their weakness. This seemed necessary in order successfully to vindicate the most precious gospel doctrines against the false and injurious aspersions which have been cast upon them. Thus far we have been mainly concerned to fortify our own positions, and defend the truth against its assailants, only hurling back a missile, now and then, when the occasion seemed too favorable to be lost. It is now proposed to pass into the enemy's territory, and to bring more fully to light the absurdity and ruinous tendencies of the system by which they seek to supplant our faith in Christ as an atoning sacrifice.

I am not ignorant of the fact, that we are warned against any attempt to attack Unitarianism, by the often-reiterated declaration of its most zealous advocates, that they have no system of divinity; that they are "liberal Christians," and allow their people to adopt such views of theology as they severally think proper. They have no creeds or confessions of faith—no, not they—and "the views of no one man, nor any number of men among them, can be taken as an index to the sentiments of the denomination."

Such statements as these, by whomsoever made, contain a palpable misrepresentation of facts, and are but too manifestly designed to deceive those who have not the means of information on the subject within their reach. It is not true that these self-styled liberal and rational Christians have no theory of religious doctrine peculiar to themselves. It is admitted that they have no specific articles of faith written and numbered; and that their creed, if reduced to form, would consist, for the most part, of negative propositions: yet they agree in many important points of doctrine; and any one, who has read their writings with care, would be able to form a creed, embracing all the peculiar *views* which they hold and teach in common.

These doctrines are generally received by their congregations, and often defended, both in public and in private, with that noisy, obtrusive zeal, which characterizes the bigoted sectarian, more eager to advance his party than to understand and obey the truth. Where motives for disguise and studied concealment do not exist, no sect in the country are half so boisterous in proclaiming their own dogmas, and attempting to scandalize, as the abettors of false doctrine, all who presume to differ from them.

The following is a faithful account of Unitarianism as it is, and sufficiently indicates the several phases which the protean error has worn, from its first development in the early part of the fourth century until now. It will be seen that those very doctrines, condemned by the celebrated Council of Nice as strangely false and blasphemous, are still embraced by the several classes of Unitarians at the present day. Whatever refinements or modifications they have undergone respect only the mere form of the heresy; wherever any material change is discoverable, it is generally, as might have been expected, from bad to worse.

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piously maintained, that there had been a time when the Son of God was not; that he was capable of virtue and vice; that he was a creature, and mutable as creatures are. Arius admitted, in a qualified sense, the pre-existence of Christ; but still held that he was a creature, and, of course, that he was neither coeternal, nor of the same substance, with the Father.

“The impiety and blasphemy of these positions were sufficiently exposed, and the error checked, by Athanasius and the Nicene Council. We have little or no account of Arianism from the fifth to the sixteenth century, when Socinius advocated the same general views of the character of Christ; only that he lowered him another step, by proclaiming more distinctly his inferiority to the Father, and his absolute subjugation, as well as all things else, to the supreme Creator of the universe. Yet even Socinius and his immediate followers supposed (inconsistently, I grant) that Christ ought to be worshiped. The Unitarian sinks the character of the Saviour still lower, by denying the propriety of worshiping him at all; but while he proclaims him a mere man, or at most a dependent creature, possessed of no attribute of the Deity, with the strangest inconsistency he *acknowledges* his divinity so far as to call him

God—as if the terms, deity and divinity, bore different significations ; or, as if the principle which constitutes the essence of the Godhead were separable from the Godhead itself.”

“It should be observed,” says Grier, in his *Epitome of Church Councils*, “that the lowest denomination of unbelievers in the descending scale, namely, the modern Unitarian, combines, with his own peculiar errors and impieties, all the errors and impieties of both Arius and Socinius, together with the absolute denial of the Holy Ghost being a divine person.” They are generally humanitarians, and believe, as their oracle, the great Dr. Priestley, expresses it, that “Christ was a man like themselves.” This is modern Unitarianism ; and most of those who rank as such embrace this article of their creed. Since, from want of candor, or some other cause not known, this sect have refused to give the world a summary of their peculiar views, and yet ask to be received to our fellowship as good Christians, it is thought that a brief exhibit of their articles of faith may be of advantage to the reader. Taking their most approved writers as authority, the following appears to be the substance of what they believe and teach. I omit some articles which they hold in common with the orthodox, and only

present the principal points about which we differ. Their confession runs on this wise:—

I. We believe there is but *one person* in the Godhead.

II. We believe that the Scriptures contain a revelation from God to man; but that the writers, as such, were not inspired, and consequently, in making their communications, were as likely to fall into error as any other men of equal intelligence would be, if placed under similar circumstances. In interpreting their language, we often find it necessary "*to restrain, modify, and turn words from their most obvious meaning.*"

III. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; but in no such sense as to imply a natural equality or sameness of essence with the Father. In our view, the very idea of sonship implies an essential or natural inferiority.

IV. We believe that Christ was not divine in any such sense as Trinitarians attach to that term. Divinity is ascribed to him, only as it may with propriety be to any other good man or holy being through whom God reveals himself.

V. We believe that Jesus of Nazareth was *only* a faithful servant and messenger of God;

that his life furnishes us an excellent example, and his death was that of a martyr.

VI. We believe that Christ had but one nature; that the supposition of two natures in one person is the greatest absurdity: yet we generally admit the pre-existence of Christ, and that he was a superangelic being.

VII. Though Jesus was a man "like ourselves," and only a man, we believe that by him, and for him, all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth; and he is before all things. These *attributes of eternal existence* and *almighty power* were "*delegated to him by the Father.*"

VIII. We do not believe in mysteries, or anything we do not understand: such as the doctrine of the trinity, the two natures of Christ, etc.

IX. We do not believe there is any personal Holy Ghost. All we understand by the word, when used in the Bible, is, a certain *attribute, energy, breath, or influence* of God.

X. We do not believe in the natural or hereditary depravity of man. Human beings are now, by nature, just what God made them—"very good."

XI. We do not believe that any atonement was necessary in order that God might, with

✓ propriety, pardon sin, but only to reconcile the world to God.

✓ XII. We do not believe it at all important what views of doctrine men entertain, if they only believe the Scriptures, and that Jesus is the Son of God.

XIII. We believe the orthodox churches, and their ministers, are great bigots : that they act very foolishly and wrongly, when they reject as heretics those who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures ; the divinity of Christ ; the personality of the Holy Ghost ; the fall and natural depravity of man ; the doctrine of atonement, and justification by faith in the merits of Christ, as a vicarious sacrifice. We don't think these, and the like doctrines, at all essential to rational Christianity ; and we greatly marvel that our brethren are so tenacious about trifles, and so illiberal, that they will neither admit us to the sacraments, nor bid us God speed in propagating our sentiments.

All these points of doctrine are variously presented by the most accredited Unitarian writers. The substance of the articles I have collected can be found in almost every elaborate treatise which has come from their press. *If they* do not appear to as good advantage, *when seen in connection, and without the bean-*

tiful dress they sometimes wear, I cannot help it. That individuals may disavow some of the sentiments given above, is to be expected ; for men, who, according to Dr. Channing's rule, "restrain, modify, and turn from their obvious meaning, the words of Scripture," may certainly do the same with language of less authority.

The reader is assured that some of the most startling positions, held by the sect whose creed has been given, have not yet been noticed, and perhaps need not be in this connection. Enough has been said to show that the gulf, which separates Unitarians from evangelical believers, is exceedingly wide and deep. The points about which we differ are vital to our holy religion, and cannot be surrendered without giving up the great peculiarities of the Christian system. Where such principles are involved there can be no compromise on our part, and our neighbors expect quite too much if they look for any.

Some of the above positions, together with the boasted consistency and simplicity of Unitarianism, will be subject to further animadversion in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

A FEW quotations, from the many before me, will show what views Unitarians entertain of the Bible. That they have entire uniformity of belief among them is not pretended: some have carried their principles a little further than others, or have more frankly stated the results to which they have been led; but they very generally agree in denying the plenary inspiration, and the consequent supreme authority, of the sacred records. If the "inspiration of superintendence" is admitted by some, it is under such restrictions and qualifications as to eliminate all the passages which assert the divinity of Christ and the meritoriousness of his vicarious sufferings.

In reading the following quotations, the uninitiated will need to be reminded that the men who speak so irreverently of the precious Bible are not professed infidels. No; they are accredited theologians, leading and standard Unitarian writers; and as their statements have been reiterated from the press and the pulpit *without* any note of dissent, they show, with *painful* certitude, how this class of professed

Christians among us regard and treat the Holy Scriptures.

Among the German Unitarians, Semler tells us that "the prophets may have delivered the offspring of their own brains as a divine revelation."

Steinbart, speaking of the New Testament, says: "The narratives, true or false, are only suited for ignorant and uncultivated minds, who cannot enter into the evidence of natural religion."

Danin represents the history of the fall as a fable, and says: "The Books of Samuel contain a multitude of falsehoods; that Daniel is full of stories contrived or exaggerated by superstition; and with the other prophets Christians have no concern."

Echhorn, speaking of Abraham going to offer up his son, insists that "God could not have required of him so horrible a crime;" and that there can be no justification, palliation, or excuse, for this *pretended* command of the divinity.*

Pages might be filled with similar quotations;

* The reader who is disposed to pursue the subject further, and has not access to the authors that have been named, is referred to "Magee on the Atonement," and "Professor Stewart's Letters to Channing."

but it would be a painful, and perhaps unprofitable, task to copy them.

The English and American Unitarians are, if possible, still more explicit in denying the plenary inspiration of the sacred writers.

Belsham, in his Review of Wilberforce, (page 19,) says, "The Scriptures contain a very faithful account of the Christian doctrine, which is the true word of God; but they are not themselves the word of God, nor do they assume that title; and it is highly improper to speak of them as such, as it leads inattentive readers to suppose they were written under a *plenary inspiration* to which they make no pretensions."

Gilbert Wakefield has published an essay, which he tells us was "designed, by a variety of arguments, to prove such gift as is commonly understood not resident in the gospel writers." He receives the Bible history "with some qualifications and softenings, on the ground of exaggerations, national vanity, and the pride of individuals."

The Monthly Repository and the Christian Pioneer, both highly esteemed by leading Unitarians in this country, hold similar language; but I will not tax the reader with quotations.

The following assertions are found in "Le Clerc on Inspiration." The American edition

was edited by Professor Norton, of Harvard, and is by him commended as a "very perspicuous and satisfactory statement on the subject in question." And I am not aware that this favorable opinion, published to the world by the professor, has ever been disavowed by any accredited Unitarian writer in this country. So far as we have any evidence, the sentiments of Le Clerc are as satisfactory to the great body of those claiming to be liberal Christians, as they were to the learned professor. But here are the statements :—

"It is very plain that the historians of Scripture were not inspired, from the contradictions that are found in the several circumstances of their histories."—Page 66. "Neither the words nor the things were inspired into those who have given us the sacred history, although that history, in the main, is very true in the principal facts."—Page 70. "There are other things which the apostles speak of their own heads, because, having no extraordinary inspiration for writing their epistles, they insert in them divers things concerning their own designs, or their particular affairs." "An inspiration is attributed to the apostles, to which they never pretended, and of which there is not the least mark left in their writings."—Page 121.

We will next hear the great Dr. Priestley, who has long been an oracle among Unitarians on both sides of the Atlantic. His statements are also known to be highly "satisfactory" to these "liberal Christians." He says: "I have often declared myself *not* a believer in the inspiration of the evangelists and apostles, as writers. The Scriptures were written without any particular inspiration, by men who wrote according to the best of their knowledge." Again, after speaking with something like becoming reverence for the sacred records, he adds: "Not that I consider the books of Scripture as inspired, and, on that account, entitled to this high degree of respect. This," he declares, "is a notion destitute of all proof; and that has done great injury to the evidence of Christianity."

It is quite in vain for any man to plead that Unitarians are not responsible for these statements, unless they personally and individually avow them. They are responsible, and are at this hour engaged, with great zeal, in propagating just such infidel sentiments, which they have sown broadcast over our whole country. These very testimonies have, within a few years, *been sent forth from the Unitarian press, in books, sermons, tracts, and periodicals; and, with*

little or no modification, they have the sanction of the sect generally.

Professor Norton says, and in this we perfectly agree with him: "It is one of the characteristic differences between Unitarians and the orthodox, that the orthodox believe the writings of the evangelists and apostles to have been composed under God's immediate and miraculous superintendence, and that no allowance is to be made for the inadvertence of the writer, and none for the exaggeration produced by strong feelings."

The Unitarians, then, do *not* believe even in what is called the inspiration of superintendence, and they *do* believe that in reading the Holy Scriptures allowance is to be made for the inadvertence of the writers, and the *exaggeration* produced by strong feelings. Let this difference be kept in mind, and it will account for the startling temerity with which some of these "liberal Christians" handle the word of God. Having denied to the writers of the canonical Scriptures anything like a divine inspiration, they, of course, receive the truths they communicate, only when they seem to quadrate with their own system of theology. When the testimony is against them, the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, are charged with "in-

advertencies, contradictions, and inconsequent reasonings;" and are treated as men who are guilty of "exaggeration," and of "conforming their statements to the prejudices of the age in which they lived." Hence, too, when the "notions of the apostles" appear to be in conflict with Unitarianism, they are easily modified, and their authority set aside.

I will not pain the pious reader, to whom Jesus and his word are precious, by presenting other impious statements which have been marked for the purpose. Enough has already been given to make the heart sick, and it is with unaffected sorrow I am compelled to say that these loose and really infidel sentiments, which have been teeming from the press, are now exerting, in many places, a most ruinous influence over the rising generation. The bitter fruits of such teaching, impiety, and irreligion, are too painfully apparent. The faithful pastor, when urging the plain requisitions of the Bible, and exhorting sinners to seek a change of heart and the witness of the Spirit through faith in the merits of Christ, is often repulsed by some caveling objection, and must turn away and weep over the infidelity of those who have learned from their professedly religious teachers *that the "apostles were frequently mistaken,*

and influenced by the prejudices of the age in which they wrote." Thus have these learned professors, and "rational preachers," by the downright infidelity of their publications, made void the law of God, and prevented perishing sinners from embracing the only hope set before them. The condition of those who have been led away with this error is truly pitiable, if not desperate. The shafts of revealed truth may be pointed at their refuge of lies, but it is in vain. Having been taught to deny its inspiration, the word of God has no *authority* with them.

CHAPTER III.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

BEFORE proceeding to consider the grounds on which Unitarians deny the inspiration of the writers who composed the several books contained in the Bible, it seems proper to state definitely what is understood by "plenary inspiration." The great importance of this subject should influence every one to give it a careful and patient examination; and though it may occupy a little space, it will relieve us from the less pleasant task of answering several ob-

jections which can be brought only against a caricature or misrepresentation of our views.

By claiming for the writers of all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments a plenary and divine inspiration, we mean to assert:—

1. That all doctrines and facts, before unknown, and from their nature not attainable by the exercise of man's unassisted faculties, such as memory, judgment, perception, and reason, were *revealed*; that is, *directly brought to the mind by the Spirit of God in some miraculous manner.*

2. In the communication of doctrines and facts before partially known to them, or within the possible knowledge of man, the writers were divinely excited and elevated altogether above themselves, so that what they record is not only truth, but by way of eminence *the truth.*

3. The narratives, or historical parts of the Scriptures, were penned, not simply as things remembered, but the writers were divinely moved to record particular facts; being so assisted and directed, that nothing important was omitted, nor anything written which was not in the strictest sense true.

4. The words of Scripture, as well as ideas, were so inspired, and the writers so directed in

the selection, that the language employed is fitted to convey the mind and will of the Spirit.

Having carefully considered what has been written by several authors of high reputation, I extract the following arguments, which appear to me perfectly conclusive. It is regretted that the limits prescribed for this work require the exclusion of much that is valuable, nor can the whole strength of an argument often be preserved in a form so much abridged.

(1.) On the first position stated above but few remarks are necessary. There are things revealed to us concerning the divine existence; God's will or purpose to redeem and save sinners; the meritorious cause, and appointed condition of that salvation—into which the angels desire to look. That such things are now known to man, is itself evidence that they were *revealed* in the highest sense of the term "revelation;" the inspiration which made them known being a special divine act, rather than a mere state of the persons through whom the communications are made. It can hardly be supposed that the prophets were by the simple quickening of a divine influence on their faculties elevated to "a state" so far above angels. To write anything of truth on such subjects, from the nature and necessity of the case, re-

quired not only assistance and illumination, but direct dictation. Such inspiration, and such only, was adequate to make known the deep things of God, "which eye hath not seen nor ear heard," and such is claimed for those who have declared them unto us, and also made known things which were to come.

This has frequently been called "the inspiration of suggestion." The term, however, seems scarcely adequate to express all that is intended. The ideas were not simply hinted, intimated, or even excited in the mind, but *communicated*, or *revealed*. This last term has the sanction of divine authority, and is in itself perhaps best suited to express the fact intended. God certainly, as the history of the transaction shows, revealed these deep things not only by inward suggestions, but also by miraculous visions, voices, and the ministry of angels. Also by that divine messenger called the Angel Jehovah, and proved to be the second person in the adorable Trinity, while the Apocalypse is expressly styled, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." Paul says, he received the gospel not of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. i, 12.

Again, we hear him saying, by *revelation* the *mystery* was made known to him, "which in

other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now *revealed* unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Eph. iii, 5.

Again, speaking of the hidden, inconceivable things, the Father hath prepared for them that love him, he adds, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

The following passages are selected as illustrative of the great variety of manner in which the writers do expressly claim for themselves such inspiration as Unitarians boldly deny. The texts speak a plain language, and need no comment. The references are given, that they may be read in their connection:—

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 1 Tim. iii, 16.

"Unto them are given the *oracles of God*." Rom. iii, 2.

"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. xxiii, 2.

"This scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake," &c. Acts i, 16.

"Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" 1 Peter i, 11.

“Every word of God is pure: add not thou unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Prov. xxx, 5, 6.

It is in view of their plenary inspiration that the Scriptures are called “the word of God;” “thy word is truth.”

To his apostles Jesus said, “He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.” Luke x, 16.

“I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.” Gal. i, 11.


“He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.” 1 Thess. iv, 8.

(2.) In communicating truths partially known before, or such as seem not entirely beyond the reach of man’s unassisted faculties, the writers were divinely quickened, and so transported beyond themselves as to remove all possibility of misapprehension, confusion in their ideas, or want of propriety in their manner of expressing them. To suppose anything less than this would be quite inconsistent with the idea of *revelation*, and must greatly weaken, if not destroy, the authority of the records. Though the authors may address us in the name and by the appointment of God, if he himself do not

speak through them, their word can have no authority, other than is derived from the manifest reasonableness of their instructions.

But thus to transfer the appeal from the Scriptures to the bar of reason, instead of submitting our imperfect reasonings to the test of Scripture, while it unsettles the foundations of our faith, is not less ruinous to man than it is dishonoring to God. The same considerations which go to prove the necessity of a revelation, show, with equal certainty, that such inspiration as is now contended for was absolutely necessary; and on this ground we might raise a strong *a priori* argument in support of the position that it was really granted. Admitting that the Bible was intended to be an authoritative rule of faith and duty, God would certainly so deliver the truth to his chosen servants as to secure this end. But this end could be secured only by preserving them from the possibility of mistake in communicating the truths he gave them. How, then, can we doubt that the necessary influence and assistance were given?

(3.) It is asserted that in recording historical facts no inspiration was necessary. This is denied; though we do not claim that the same degree of inspiration was needed to render perfect those portions of the sacred records now



referred to. Some have spoken of a kind of superintendence. This might be adequate to preserve from error; yet mere superintendence does not, I think, express all the divine agency that was necessary, and was really exerted, in the production of the histories contained in the Bible. The Spirit of God certainly moved or excited the authors to enter upon this important work; and, in this respect at least, it may be said of sacred history, as truly as of prophecy, that it came not by the will of man, but holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They were divinely directed in relation to the particulars they should incorporate in their work; and many facts, of which they could have had no personal knowledge, were miraculously furnished them. Of this nature are some of the most important parts of the Pentateuch; and even the evangelists, who received the oft-repeated instructions of "He who spake as never man spake," did not rely on their own recollection, but waited, according to his direction, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, who brought all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them. Ever where this were less distinctly stated, it would be evident from the manner of their writing. *There is often a depth of wisdom in their reflec*

on particular facts, and an elevation of style, which, taken in connection with their former habits and circumstances, quite forbid the supposition that they wrote without special assistance.

(4.) The fourth position, taken above, maintains the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. It is not asserted that every word and syllable was dictated by the Spirit; but that whenever assistance was needed, in order to a proper selection and arrangement of words to convey the sense, such assistance was granted. A doubt on this point cannot fail, in some measure, to weaken the *authority* of the inspired volume, as a rule of faith. That it does so we have painful evidence in the quotations already given. They who affect to distinguish between the inspiration of the truth contained in the Scriptures, and the inspiration of the writers, as such, do not regard the record as the word of God.

But, aside from the fact that the writers variously claim this degree of inspiration, does not the very nature of the case require and suppose it? I think it does. To me it seems a thing incredible, that God should inspire a few men with vastly important religious ideas, intended not only for themselves, but for mankind, and yet have no care for the manner of their trans-

mission to others. The simple fact that the truth, in a suitable and definite form, was committed to these few men, was surely no guaranty that they, however well disposed to do so, would be able to communicate it. Even those who are skilled in the use of language often find it difficult to convey to others the ideas they entertain; frequently, from a want of sufficiently close attention to the arrangement of their words, they not only fail to express the truth clearly, but convey a meaning they never intended. How much more must this be the case with men unaccustomed to write? Uneducated men, called from the common business avocations of life, and intrusted with truths both new and highly important, would be liable to give the world a very lame and confused account of them. This would necessarily be the case even if the truths were distinctly entertained in the mind of the writer; but it is, at least, questionable whether *new ideas* can be communicated at all, unless they are clothed in words. The following very sensible remarks, based on principles of our mental constitution, which one may discover for himself by reflection, are commended to the attention of the reader:—

“Every man who has attended to the operations of his own mind knows that we thin

words; or that when we form a train or combination of ideas we clothe them with words: and that ideas which are not thus clothed are indistinct and confused. Let a man try to think on any subject, moral or religious, without the aid of language, and he will either experience a total cessation of thought, or, if this be impossible, will feel himself constrained, notwithstanding all his endeavors, to have recourse to words as the instrument of his mental operations.

“As a great part of the Scriptures was suggested or revealed to the writers; as the sentiments or thoughts, which were perfectly new to them, were conveyed to their minds by the Spirit; it is plain they must have been accompanied with words proper to express them, and, consequently, that the words were dictated by the same influences on the mind which communicated the ideas. The ideas could not come without words, because without them they could not be conceived. A notion of the form and qualities of a material object may be produced by subjecting it to our senses; but there is no conceivable method of making us acquainted with new, abstract truths, or things which do not lie within the sphere of sensation, but by conveying to the mind, in some way or other.

the words significant of them. In all those passages, therefore, which were written by revelation, it is manifest the words were inspired; and this is still more evident with respect to those passages which the writers themselves did not understand. No man could write an intelligible discourse on a subject he does not understand, unless he were furnished with the words as well as the sentiments; and that the sacred penmen did not always understand what they wrote might be safely inferred from the comparative darkness of the dispensation under which they lived; and is intimated by the apostle, 1 Peter x, 10, 11.

“In other passages of Scripture, those not excepted in which the writers relate such things as had fallen within the compass of their own knowledge, we shall be disposed to believe that the words were inspired, if we calmly and seriously weigh the following considerations:—If Christ promised to his disciples that when they were brought before kings and governors for his sake, ‘it should be given them in that same hour what they should speak,’ (Matt. x, 19, 20; Luke xii, 11, 12,) a promise which cannot reasonably be understood to signify less than that both words and sentiments should be dictated *to them*—it is fully as credible that they should

be assisted in the same manner when they wrote, especially as the record was to last through all ages, and be a rule of faith to all the nations of the earth. Besides, Paul affirms that he and the other apostles ‘spoke not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost taught;’ which general assertion may be applied to their writings as well as to their sermons.”—*Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge*.

The objections generally urged against these views, however plausible, may be satisfactorily answered.

The varieties of style characterizing the different books of the sacred writings are often produced to show that in the selection and arrangement of their words, the writers were left to the guidance of their own genius and literary taste; and it has been asserted, with great apparent confidence, that if inspiration extended any further than to the truth communicated, it would produce a perfect uniformity of style, the same facts being always narrated in precisely the same words. But this conclusion does by no means follow from the premises. To maintain it, is not only to limit the Holy One of Israel, but to estimate his wisdom below that of the imperfect creature.

Does not everybody know that an agreeable variety of manner is a positive excellence, of which even the least-informed readers are not wholly insensible? And is not much attention often deservedly paid to this in preparing books for general circulation? And shall we look for nothing of this pleasing variety in the book of books, designed to bless and guide every wanderer on the earth? Shall benevolent men, by attention to the manner or style of their communications, gain access to the hearts of thousands, and yet the all-wise God be either ignorant of, or careless to employ, this important means of alluring men to the path of life? What could be more unreasonable? *No*; it is not thus. He who gave to his inspired servants their peculiarities of temperament and manner, could, with infinite ease, speak through them as instruments inditing new, or directing in the selection of familiar, words, yet preserving the style natural to each. Thus is it true that "there are many operations, but of the same Spirit."

The style of the Psalms, and that of the powerfully argumentative epistles and pungent addresses of the great apostle, is, indeed, very *different*; yet the Holy Ghost spoke by the *mouth of David*, and Paul taught the people

“not in the *words* which man’s wisdom teacheth.”

Another objection to verbal inspiration, which seems at first view to present some difficulty, is, “that the same facts are related, and the same discourses reported, by the several evangelists and others, with considerable verbal difference.” What has been said above is mostly applicable here. Let it be remarked, that the difference is only apparent and verbal; that the real discrepancies and contradictions, blasphemously alledged by some Unitarian writers, are nowhere to be found.

But what is here complained of, if rightly considered, instead of weighing against, furnishes a strong presumption in favor of, plenary or full inspiration.

Assuming, what will not be denied, that, in making a revelation of his will, God cared to have it accompanied by the strongest evidence, on the supposition that he dictated or directed in the selection of the words, we would expect to find the verbal differences alluded to.

It is always allowed to strengthen the evidence when several witnesses state the same facts in different words. Also when a coherent chain of circumstances is made out by each of several witnesses without collusion, supplying

some of the necessary links, the case is much stronger than when a consecutive narrative is given by one. Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that He who made man, and knows his constitution perfectly, when about to reveal important truths to him, the belief or rejection of which involves the eternal happiness or misery of his creature, could wholly disregard the laws of evidence by dictating the same words to all the witnesses he had sent? If men can, and do, communicate the same truths in different words, and if this difference of phraseology is an excellence in works of human composition, by what authority do men deny the Holy Ghost either the ability or the right to do the same?

The importance of this subject is a sufficient apology for the time occupied in its discussion. On no subject do the Unitarians and the orthodox differ more widely than in their respective views of the Holy Scriptures. The orthodox believer receives these sacred writings as coming directly from God, by a special and supernatural revelation. Consequently, they are to him of supreme authority, as the only and sufficient rule of his faith and practice. He claims to be rational in his belief—he does not divorce *reason and religion*; but, before he receives the *revelation*, demands evidence which strongly

commends itself to his understanding. He is not averse to judicious criticism, applied according to the established principles of interpretation; nor does he refuse any help that is offered to enable him to understand aright the words indited by the revealing Spirit. But when this is done, his reasonings are at an end: he has no further questions to ask, but cordially receives it all, knowing that whatever God has spoken must be true.

The Unitarian, as we have seen in numerous quotations from their standard writers, is not satisfied with having an authentic copy of the Scriptures, and the right to interpret them according to the established principles of exegesis; when the meaning of the language is ascertained, he does not then bow to it as a perfect standard; because the language of the Bible, in his esteem, like that of any other book, is altogether of human origin, and materially modified by the peculiar views and local prejudices of the writers: while holding these views, it cannot be to him the *authoritative word of God*. If the doctrine seem to him consistent and reasonable, it is received; if not, he recognizes nothing in the nature or source of the record to oblige his faith. When we confront his errors with plain and positive testimony from the Bible, if he can

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

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neither find any pretext for doubting the authenticity of the passages, nor fritter away their meaning by forced criticisms, he will not hesitate to say: "The writers, as such, were not inspired, and in these instances were mistaken, or did not mean what they seem to say." If pressed to the wall with strong Scripture arguments, he waxes even more bold, and says, in the language of Mr. Belsham, a very prince among Unitarian doctors, "Jesus Christ was a man constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices, and frailties." Consequently, "when Jesus Christ or his apostles deliver opinions unconnected with the object of their mission, such opinions, and their reasonings on them, are to be received with the same attention and caution with those of other persons in similar circumstances, of similar education, and with similar habits of thinking." If the voice of conscience is not quite hushed, and he wants more authority to keep him in countenance in his bold and impious stand against the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, he has it. The great Dr. Priestley has said, for his encouragement: "The opinions of Paul, John, or Jesus Christ, are to be received cautiously, like the opinions of any *other men*;" and the same sentiment has been

reiterated by more than a score of American writers.

Such "liberal men" boast not a little of their "rational Christianity"—of religion rescued from the shackles of superstition; but they speak of the Bible more like infidels than believers. It is painful indeed to hear men, who occupy the place of religious teachers, complain of the inspired writers as "lame historians, and inconclusive reasoners, full of Jewish prejudices."

And are these the heralds of *rational* religion? "My soul, come not thou into their secret." Reader, I beseech you, by the preciousness of the truth, and by your cherished reverence for the oracles of God, beware of this so poorly disguised infidelity! Under whatever fair professions the enemy may seek to destroy your confidence in the Bible—the whole Bible, as the inspired word of God—give no place to the devil, no, not for an hour

CHAPTER IV.

UNITARIAN ACCOUNT OF THE CREATION.

To avoid the overwhelming argument in favor of the divinity of Christ, drawn from his works of almighty power, Unitarians, as the best they can do, have ventured the preposterous opinion, that "He created all things only as the agent whom God employed, and by a power that was delegated to him;" and the usual illustration is that of a contractor who builds rail-roads for the government, or for others who may project the improvement: in which case it is customary to say that the government built the road, also that the agent or contractor built it, and perhaps the same may, with equal propriety, be said of the laborers who in person performed the work.

This stereotyped explanation is as strangely unreasonable and absurd, as it is unscriptural, and will certainly appear so after a little examination.

It contradicts the Scriptures in two important particulars. It first declares that *God did not actually* create anything, but employed and empowered Jesus Christ to do the work for him.

Compare this view, degrading alike to the *Father* and the *Son*, with Psa. c. 3: "The

Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us." "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers." *Psa. viii, 3.* "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens *are the work of thy hands.*" *Psa. cii, 25.* While Job trembles before God, the Maker of all things, who "*alone spreadeth out the heavens.*" A multitude of passages might be brought, showing that God was himself the real and actual Creator of all things, and did not engage any creature to perform the work for him. This is one error of the explanation we are considering. In the next place it asserts that Jesus Christ did not create anything for himself, but in the character of an agent or contractor for another. This also is positively contradicted by the apostle, who declares of our divine Lord, that "by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by him, *and for him.*"

Having shown the position to be unscriptural, we will now look at its reasonableness.

The power to create must be omnipotent power, which is an essential attribute of Jehovah; and it devolves on the Unitarian to show how it is possible for God to transfer this attribute

to one of his creatures, and yet himself remain omnipotent. And also how it is possible for a finite creature of limited capacity to receive and wield this infinite power. These points he may be expected to make very plain, as he certainly cannot ask us to believe what is veiled in mystery; and when he has grappled with these difficulties, there are others still that demand his attention.

All Unitarians hold that Christ had but one nature. They ridicule the orthodox for believing that both the human and divine natures were united in his person. Now the human nature of Christ began to exist a little more than eighteen hundred years ago. Of this there can be no doubt—our information on the subject is full and the evidence reliable. He having but one nature, and that nature having no existence before the time specified, it will be important to show how all things were created by him *thousands of years before he himself had any existence.*

All this may appear quite plain to those who claim the distinction of being “rational Christians,” but to others it seems a little mysterious that omnipotent power should be delegated to a mere human being, and exercised by him in the actual creation of all things, long before he himself was created. Is this one of the in-

telligible propositions of which we hear so much?

Perhaps it will be said, "In America Unitarian opinions are much divided on the point of Christ's pre-existence;" that while "they all believe him to be a derived and dependent being," some allow that "he was created in a remote period of time."* But this, alas! without relieving from the present difficulty, only creates another, to escape from which is equally impossible. Admitting the pre-existence of Christ, and denying that he had two natures, they are bound to show it possible for the *same* nature to begin to be only eighteen hundred years ago, and yet to have been created in a more "remote period of time."

Cannot a child see the ruinous absurdity of the supposition? And, besides, they who admit the pre-existence of Christ, still maintain he was only a creature, and the best we can make of their doctrine is, that God first created him a being of finite capacity, then delegated to him the attribute of omnipotence, and appointed him to be the actual Creator of all things. To reconcile this with the Scriptures, it is necessary to take along with it the strange

* Statement by Professor Palfrey of Cambridge, published in the *Encyclopedia Americana*.

absurdity that he *created himself*; for, in the catalogue of his works, *no created* being is excepted: "Without him was not anything made that was made." He created *all things* in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, so that it becomes necessary for the Unitarian, either boldly to contradict both the evangelist and the apostle, or admit that this peculiar *creature*, of whom he speaks, is neither visible nor invisible: that he was never made, and does not exist either in heaven or in earth.

What plain, rational Christianity, is this? There is yet one view of the subject which has not been noticed. That class of Unitarians who denominate themselves "Christians," deny the proper humanity of our Saviour, as well as his real and essential divinity. They seem to consider him a glorious being, in all respects above man, and in his pre-existent state holding a rank second only to the infinite God, his Father, to whom they believe he was vastly inferior, and, like all other finite beings, held accountable. This pre-existent Spirit, regarded by them as "the Son of God," yet in no such sense as to imply his equality or oneness of nature with his Father, they believe took a human body. In this incarnation no human soul was received, but that "divine Spirit"

alone dwelt in and animated the body of flesh. They grant that the body was real flesh, and bones, and blood, physically constituted as our bodies are; but the rational soul being wanting, their theory requires the rejection of his proper humanity.

It remains to be seen whether this view is either Scriptural or reasonable. While some of the aspects in which it presents the subject seem a little more plausible, and the practical results which flow from it may possibly be less ruinous to those who adopt it, I have no hesitation in saying, that it neither harmonizes with the plain testimony of the Scriptures, nor does it contribute anything toward an escape from the absurdities involved in the theory of the humanitarians.

The numerous passages of Scripture which are plainly against this supposition need not be quoted at length. What means such language as this? "Thou shalt make his *soul* an offering for sin;" "He shall see of the travail of his *soul* and be satisfied;" "Because he poured out his *soul* unto death;" "Now is my *soul* troubled, and what shall I say?" "My *soul* is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." These familiar texts, to which any reader can readily turn, are all applied to Christ, and certainly prove

that he had a soul which could be "troubled," became "exceeding sorrowful," and travailed in pain, when an offering for sin was made. How, then, can this absolute denial that he had a soul be reconciled with the teaching of the Bible?

But, in the next place, we can show this theory to be palpably unreasonable. Let us look at it for a moment. This pre-existent Spirit, which, after the incarnation, alone animated the physical nature of Jesus Christ, was the actual Creator of all things, and as such reveals the most amazing wisdom in the order and intricate harmony of all his works. Yet Christ certainly possessed an intellectual, rational soul, or spiritual nature of some kind, which at first was quite limited in knowledge, and *acquired* wisdom by the ordinary means of human culture and improvement. Luke ii, 40-52.

Is it not monstrously absurd to suppose that "a superangelic, and almost infinitely wise being, could need the instruction of Joseph and Mary in order that he might increase in wisdom," and by a gradual process learn some of the properties of the things he himself had made?

Is it not passing strange that all the wisdom he had before, and his perfect knowledge of all

things, should be destroyed by his taking the body that was prepared for him?

Every modification of the Unitarian theory, when examined, and brought to the test of either Scripture or sound reason, will be found to involve its advocates in difficulty from which there is no possibility of escape. It is utterly impossible to reconcile the different positions they are compelled to take, and they often seem to have been taken without any reference to their agreement with one another.

But, rather than to receive the humbling doctrines of the cross, the proud heart of man will catch at almost anything which is presented as a substitute. The very men who find it necessary to "modify, restrain, and turn from their most obvious meaning, the words of Scripture," whenever they are supposed to teach anything unreasonable, or contrary to what is called the nature of things, seem to think it very rational to believe that God delegated his omnipotence to a creature, yet continued to be omnipotent himself; that Jehovah gave away *all power*, transferred it to another distinct and separate being—yet retained *all power* himself; that this creature, by a delegated power, created both himself and everything else, long before he had

any existence; and finally, according to the Arian notion, that the "divine Son of God," who by his wisdom made the worlds, forgot, or in some way became ignorant of, the works of his own hands, and then again, by improving the opportunities afforded him, "increased in wisdom, and in favor with God and man."

CHAPTER V.

MORAL TENDENCY OF UNITARIANISM.

IN what manner Unitarians regard and treat the Holy Scriptures, we have already seen. The injurious tendency of the system deserves some further notice. If, as has been before intimated, this corruption of Christian doctrine contains the essential elements of infidelity, and tends directly to destroy all that is vital and efficient in our religious institutions, the fact ought to be known, and the people warned against so insidious a foe.

In charging these infidel tendencies on Unitarianism, we appeal to facts, to show both that the tree is bad, and its fruit bad.

Though fully convinced that the Unitarianism of the present day is a species of baptized *infidelity*, it is frankly admitted that very many

have been led away with the error who have no suspicion that they occupy common ground with the most dangerous enemies of religion. If convinced of this, the discovery would be to them, as it is to us, really alarming, and might lead to a renunciation of their antichristian principles.

To settle the question of infidelity, as belonging to the system of theology we are considering, it is necessary to determine what constitutes infidelity—to fix on some characteristic marks which distinguish between an infidel and a Christian, or true believer.

Any one who has been unfortunate enough to read the most popular infidel works—the writings of men whose influence is most potent for evil—will be able to bear witness to the following facts:—1. To be an infidel does not necessarily imply an *avowed* rejection of Christianity. The most notorious infidels of the last two centuries have, almost without exception, spoken of the Bible in terms decidedly favorable; they confess that it contains a revelation from God, and teaches the best religion; they laud the beautiful simplicity of its language, and the unequalled sublimity of its doctrines; and, in a word, they claim both to believe and greatly respect the gospel. Instead of calling themselves infi-

dels, they affect to scorn the name, and some of them insist that they are the most consistent Christians. I had selected numerous extracts to confirm the truth of these statements, but must omit them for want of room. It will be understood, of course, that they often utter sentiments which it would be hard to reconcile with the professions they make; but this does not alter the case, and is only another evidence that the advocates of error are generally inconsistent with themselves. Nor do all infidels treat the character of the Saviour with irreverence and open disrespect. Most of them believe that there was such a person as Jesus Christ—that he lived, labored, suffered, and died, much as is represented in the Gospels. The testimony of Rousseau is familiar to most readers, and shows that even confirmed infidels may greatly venerate and admire the character of our Saviour. 2. It is certain that real and inveterate infidelity is sometimes connected with, and cloaked by, a *profession* of religion. Hobbes and Collins, and Woolston and Morgan, all claimed to be religious men. They spoke in the most respectful manner of the institutions of Christianity, and themselves partook of the sacrament of our Lord's supper. Voltaire had *always* professed himself a Christian, and con-

tinued to do so upon his death-bed. Woolston, and Dodwell, and Bolingbroke, professed great zeal for the Christian religion. Yet these men were infidels, known to be such, and by common consent are so denominated.

It is plain, then, that we must look for that which distinguishes between infidels and Christians in something besides a mere profession of religion, or the declaration of reverence for the Author of the system, or even the acknowledgment that the books which teach it are, in some sense, of divine original.

On the following points Christians and infidels differ very widely; and it will not be difficult to show to which class our leading Unitarians have the strongest affinity:—

“The true believer receives the canonical Scriptures as a revelation from God.” He does this in view of evidence both internal and external, which appears to him entirely satisfactory and conclusive. The doctrines they contain he believes, asking no other or stronger demonstration of their truth than “God hath said so, therefore it is true.” Thus he regards every doctrine, clearly taught in the Bible, as having authority, and demanding his unqualified assent. The infidel, on the contrary, does not, whatever he may profess, in fact do this. If he admit, and

many of them do, that a divine revelation has been made, he will be free to say "the Bible contains that revelation;" by which he means that the Bible is a *history* of the revelation—such a *narrative respecting* it as honest, well-meaning, but ignorant and prejudiced, men have given us; so that, in reading it, we must make due allowances, and beware that we do not mistake the ignorance of men for the revelations of God.

The true Christian believes that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God"—that, by a miraculous, divine influence, the sacred writers were securely kept from all mistakes and errors, and assisted to communicate the most important things in the most proper manner. The infidel, though he may talk ever so much about the divine revelations, rejects some parts of the sacred volume as unworthy to be thus regarded. He admits that the Bible *contains* a revelation, the truth is in it; but where, or in what part, he does not presume to tell. In determining this point, he claims that every one should be allowed to consider and judge for himself. Whatever seems to any person reasonable, and worthy of such an Author, he may receive as the word of God; what appears to him *unreasonable*, or contrary to the established nature of things, he feels at liberty to reject.

These remarks might be extended, but are perhaps sufficient to show some of the peculiarities which have always distinguished the believer from the infidel. They are designed to show that all who do not receive the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a revelation from God, possessing supreme authority as the rule of their faith and duty ; all who deny the full inspiration of these Scriptures, and set them aside, either as a whole or in part, as not coming from God ; all who dare to accuse the writers with inconclusive reasonings, mistakes, errors, and contradictions, or with recording the mere suggestions of their own minds—all such persons, notwithstanding they may claim the Christian name, and even occupy the place of teachers, are really infidels, and ought to be so denominated.

If these views are correct, and they will not be called in question, some of the most prominent Unitarian writers, both in Europe and America, have, beyond doubt, become infidels. Some of their writings were quoted in a former chapter, and I will not pain the reader with further extracts. We hear them, with great positiveness of manner, denying the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures ; declaring that “the canonical books are not a revelation”—“are

not the word of God." They constantly speak of these holy books, or portions of them, as "human compositions," "mixed with the doubtfulness of old traditions, and with systems of superannuated errors." The writers they do not hesitate to charge with "superstition," "prejudice," "inadvertence," and "exaggeration." They were "inconclusive reasoners," influenced by the "errors of the age," "inconsistent with themselves, and with one another;" "lame historians, whose testimony must be received cautiously, and with considerable abatement, on the score of national vanity and individual prejudices."

This is only a specimen of the materials with which we might fill a volume from the same source. Such impious language must be shocking to the feelings of any man who cherishes becoming reverence for the oracles of God. I am pained to record, and know the pious reader will be equally so to read, sentiments such as these. May God forgive, and yet recover from this snare of the devil, those who have been led so far astray!

Perhaps it will be said that *all* Unitarians do not hold such language as has been selected from their principal writers. This is cheerfully *admitted*. Some authors could be named, who

rank as Unitarians, and who speak of the Scriptures with reverence. They are understood, at least tacitly, to dissent from their brethren who so shamefully abuse and vilify the sacred writers ; but these do not give shape and character to the system, nor are we to judge of its tendency from the amiable and respectful manner in which they treat the subject of religion. Other influences may, for a time, counteract the natural tendency of the principles they have adopted ; but if they do not hold on to the Bible, the whole Bible, as the divinely inspired and authoritative word of God, there is no safety for them : they are already, unhappily, too near the vortex of infidelity ; and if this only sufficient chart is given up, they will inevitably be drawn into it.

The infidelity of the system, as was to be expected, develops itself gradually ; and the history of the controversy shows that the leading Unitarians in this country now boldly occupy positions with respect to the Scriptures, which, when formerly attributed to them, were denied, with bitter complaints of misrepresentation. Fifty years ago, it was resented, as a great and wanton injury, when American Unitarians were ranked in the same class with those of Europe ; but since then the very sentiments, which were

professedly held in abhorrence, have been widely circulated, and warmly commended by their publishers and editors of books, pamphlets, sermons, and periodicals. So rapid has been the downward progress, that we now have home productions which vie with anything they have imported in the boldness of their attacks on the sacred Scriptures. The tree seems to grow rapidly in our soil, and has already borne some as ripe fruit as either in England or Germany. Theodore S. Parker, whose books are noticed, by their publishers, in the "select list of Unitarian publications," has written blasphemies which are almost without a parallel; while others, of less talents, seem to have stretched themselves beyond their measure in efforts to disparage the claim of the sacred writers to infallibility, because of their plenary inspiration.

These works are not without considerable influence; and it is to be presumed that their effect on different minds will be quite different. Thank God, they will open the eyes of some who have, at least, been favorable to the system which has produced them. The infidelity they contain is a little too rampant to be current, even in districts where Unitarianism has had the ascendancy. Some, into whose hands they

may fall, will exclaim, as they read them, "Is this, then, the fruit of our liberal sentiments? this the result to which Unitarianism, with its lofty pretensions, is leading us? Are we to receive these senseless extravagances, the spawn of driveling, misnamed philosophers, and allow them to take from us the pure word of God as the rule of our faith? No atoning Saviour; no sanctifying Spirit; no soul separate from the body; no certainty of the life to come; and no Bible of intelligible meaning. Why should we cleave to a system which tends so manifestly to rob us of everything that is vital and valuable in religion, and to leave, in their stead, only the negative, lifeless crudities, of a cold and cheerless infidelity?"

The effect of such works on other minds will be to entirely unsettle their convictions of the truth of the Bible, and break whatever hold religion has had on them. Hearing their religious teachers so violently attack the Bible, charging many portions of it with mistakes and errors, and setting them aside as no part of revelation, they will rationally conclude that, with equal propriety, they may set aside the whole: for if one man may reject this text, another may reject that; and nobody can decide *what is to be given up, and what retained.*

Here, for instance, is a passage which contravenes my system of theology ; which seems to me inexplicable or absurd ; and I reject it. Another man rejects another, for the same reason, and with the same right. A third does the same, and a fourth, until the whole is condemned. Thus everything belonging to religion will seem to them involved in endless uncertainty, about which it is not necessary to perplex themselves ; and the more convenient maxim will be adopted, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

There has certainly been some advancement made in the speculations, or rather the *disclosures*, of "rational Christians," in this country. The controversy with them has approached the point to which it was long ago predicted they must come. They even now seek to wrest from our hands the Bible, as the authoritative word of God. The best of them "do not hesitate to modify, restrain, and turn from their most obvious meaning, the words of Scripture." Others go a little further, and either formally reject large portions of the Bible, or (what amounts to the same thing) interpret their meaning much as we interpret the Greek and *Latin* poets, making all due allowance for their *fictions*, their machinery of angels, demons, and

spiritual beings; for the ignorance and prejudices of the writers themselves, and their prudent accommodations to the superstitions of the times.

To regard and treat the Scriptures thus, is to thrust the dagger at the very heart of real Christianity. Such a system is essentially infidel in its principles and tendency. Its prevalence would involve us in universal skepticism; would take from us all that is held most dear in our religious institutions, our sabbaths, our gospel, and our everlasting hopes.

These are not conjectures as to the probable effect of Unitarian theology, and their mode of establishing it. The fearful experiment has been tried, and the melancholy result is known. Let any one read Bogue and Bennett's "History of Dissenters," especially that part embracing the period from the death of Queen Anne to the accession of George III., and he will see a faithful portraiture of the legitimate and ripe fruits of Unitarian sentiments. At the time referred to, the heresy prevailed chiefly among the Presbyterian ministers; and the facts which have been collected by the authors show the tendency of the new doctrine with fearful certainty. Fields sown with such seed soon produced a rank harvest of irreligion

and infidelity. Respect for the Holy Scriptures, the sabbath, and religious institutions, declined, until their places of worship were nearly deserted. The same preachers were in the pulpits, but they taught not the same truths; and the vitality, the awakening energy, of their ministrations was gone.

“At first there was more religion in the congregations where Arianism was negatively preached, than those who consider only that system would be led to expect: but it was owing to the influence of orthodox doctrine to which the people had formerly listened; and it was maintained by the exercises of private devotion, and by the perusal of the writings of the most eminent nonconformist divines. Though starved in the public ordinances by the meagre discourses of the Arian preachers, they were feasted in their closets by the volumes of Baxter, Owen, Flavel, Charnock, and Howe. But these Christians were gradually removed by death, and then the legitimate influence of error appeared. The religious principles of those who remained were less powerful, and had a weaker hold on their minds. The exercises of secret devotion which were the delight of their fathers did not produce the same degree of pleasure. Those books which were

considered as the classics of the Puritans in the closet, gave place to those less spiritual, but more congenial to their taste. The stimulus to every duty, formerly communicated by the ardor of public worship, ceased to be felt. Family worship began to be offered but once a day, and with many it was confined to the sabbath; others neglected it entirely."

Let it be observed that these historical statements refer only to the first-fruits of the Arian heresy, and their growth checked by opposing influences. Tracing the history a little further, we find a more full development of the system. The whole narrative is replete with painful interest, but we have room only for a short extract: "Let him that readeth understand."

"The tendencies of the new system (Unitarianism) became every day more manifest in the skeptical coldness of its disciples, and their entire conformity to the spirit and manners of the world: for with the faith they shook off the practices of the first founders of the dissent. The morality of the sabbath was denied, and visiting on that day grew into fashion. Theatres were represented as innocent scenes of amusement; and the card-table, warmly recommended by Dr. Priestley's own example, was the constant resort of those who were withdrawn

from the closet, and from meetings for prayer, by the denial of divine influences, which alone can render prayer a reasonable service."

Speaking of the Presbyterians who had very generally become Unitarians in belief, the author of the history adds:—

"The complete amalgamation with the world which prevailed among them formed a disgraceful exception to the general truth of the remark, that the dissenters are a religious body."

The same results appear in this country, though, for want of sufficient time, the work of ruin may be less complete. Ministers preach and publish sermons rife with arrant infidelity; declaim against revivals as the offspring of enthusiasm; fraternize with the avowed enemies of religion as worthy reformers; attend anti-sabbath conventions; and variously give their influence to increase the alarmingly prevalent skepticism of the times. In the very temples where once the faithful ambassador was heard to preach Jesus and him *crucified*, men dare to cast reproach on his cross as a "central gallows," an ignominious scaffold. The effect on the spiritual and practical religion of the people is lamentable indeed. They have preached unto them another gospel, and it is not the power of God unto their salvation. Deep

conviction for sin, and the joyful deliverance of the broken-hearted penitent who flees to Christ as an atoning Saviour, are now nearly, if not quite, unknown in Unitarian congregations; and where known at all, can be traced to the knowledge of evangelical truths obtained from other sources. The holy ardor of the true believer, to whom the Saviour is precious; the supreme love of Christ, and the high religious enjoyment arising from the knowledge of sin forgiven, and the inward witness of the Holy Spirit; have no countenance in the cold speculations of Unitarian theology, and cannot long exist where the essential truths of the gospel are not received. The experiment, fatal to many, has been sufficiently tried, and the painful result is known. The impotency of the system, as an agent in promoting vital godliness, has been demonstrated.

Unitarians in some of their publications have, without intending it, virtually conceded this point. At first, when laboring to introduce their views to the notice of well-disposed people, they insisted much on the happy *tendency* of the doctrines they taught, as a convincing argument in favor of their truth. In the early history of the sect they are found talking confidently about the comparative moral tendencies

of Trinitarianism and Unitarianism ; but when the system began to develop itself, and a gentleman of Boston renounced it on the ground of what he supposed its *unfavorable tendency and effects*, this grand argument on which they had seemed to rely was suddenly relinquished, and the American Unitarian Association issued a tract to show that the happy influence of a doctrine in producing seriousness, deep feeling, prayer, a strict observance of the sabbath, zeal and effort in the cause of religion, was "no test," no sure evidence, of its truth. (See Tract No. 17, and the Spirit of the Pilgrims, vol. iii, p. 400.)

In closing this chapter I have only to add, that the causes which were put in operation being known, the sad effects we have been contemplating were to be expected.

The great and distinguished doctrines of the cross cannot be set aside or obscured without destroying the moral power of the gospel. Spiritual, heavenly knowledge, the knowledge of Christ as Redeemer and Saviour, is eternal life. To be ignorant of him in his true character is to abide in death. Men who deny his atonement have sought out many inventions, but they have labored in vain ; neither is there

salvation in any other. All their philosophy is insufficient to regenerate one fallen spirit, or purify the fountain of human actions. It is only when the diseased and dying sinner looks to Calvary, and beholds the Lamb of God slain for him, that his faith makes him whole, and the principles of a holy, a divine life, are produced in his heart. It is here alone, in his own appointed and costly Sacrifice, that God reveals his deep designs, the riches of his grace, in the most affecting manner. Pardon for the guilty, help for the helpless, and life for the perishing, are proclaimed only through Him who gave himself a ransom for us all. What then could be expected, in the way of religious influence, of a system which utterly discards these precious doctrines? Having taught its disciples to turn their backs on the sun, can it be wondered if it leave them, at the end, bewildered in the mazes of speculative infidelity? It cannot be otherwise. If I close my eyes to the light which emanates from the cross; or for a moment turn them away from the infinite Sacrifice through which God was there reconciling the world unto himself; I look on darkness which is impenetrable—I have no other ground of assurance, that God, who pities our helpless misery, can

“declare his righteousness in the forgiveness of sins that are past.” ‘If I give up the Bible as the infallible word of God, by denying its inspiration, all is uncertainty, and the progress will be from doubt to confirmed unbelief.

CHAPTER VI.

SOME MEANS BY WHICH UNITARIANISM IS PROMOTED.

AN ordinary attention to the history of the church will convince any one that this heresy, like most others, must be migratory. Not possessing the elements necessary to permanency, it must change localities, or become obsolete. When the protean error can assume no new form which is not promptly exposed to the light of truth—its shapeless proportions made apparent, and its bulwarks of defense swept away by the force of sound Scripture arguments; and especially when it is demonstrated to be an evil tree by the bitter fruit of infidelity and sin clustering on its branches; it must be transplanted to some other soil, or wither and die. These changes furnish ample opportunity for noticing how the work is done.

The result of our reading and observation is

the unwelcome but strong conviction that many supporters of Unitarianism, in its several modifications, have been guilty of a species of Jesuitism, which merits the severest rebuke. It is painful and humiliating to be under the necessity of noticing such things in those who profess to teach us the way of life, but the facts should be known, that the inexperienced may be on their guard. While this class of religionists claim remarkable liberality for their sentiments, they certainly show but little of that manly honesty and frankness which characterize those who are conscious that they have truth and reason on their side. Ministers who had adopted "liberal sentiments" made no allusion to the change, and managed to speak on the subject in terms so guarded and ambiguous, as effectually to conceal their new views on points known to be esteemed, by the churches they served, of vital importance. This deception was practiced by some for several years, with the hope of gradually effecting the same change in congregations.

The books that were put in circulation were either imported or reprints of English works, for which no man in his religious capacity was held responsible, and if some articles in the periodicals were plainly in favor of the "new doc-

trine," they were generally anonymous. Thus, while the pulpit was masked and silent, "the opposition to evangelical religion was carried on for the most part in secret, and proselytes were made rather by suppressing truth, than by explicitly proposing and defending error." This policy seems to have been pursued by the New-England Unitarian preachers very generally until the spring of 1815, when the cloak of concealment was thrown, or rather stripped off. "The temporizing policy of Unitarians in this country had long been disapproved by their brethren in England, who took effectual means, at last, to expose and correct it." Extracts of letters were published by Mr. Belsham, in London, in 1812, which made the unwelcome disclosure, and fastened the charge of Unitarianism on individuals, so that it could no longer be evaded. Their true sentiments and position being thus brought to light, with manifest unwillingness they were compelled to take a stand before the public. A spirited controversy followed, by which the progress of error was checked and the truth successfully vindicated.

It is now believed that the influence of Unitarianism in New-England has reached its maximum, and is on the decline. This opinion is confirmed by the growing prosperity of the

orthodox churches—the annual increase of ministers, and congregations, and places of worship ; while Unitarians show no such evidences of their progress. I have not at hand the recent statistics of Harvard University, but have heard it affirmed that they show a material decrease in the number of their theological students ; while the institutions of the orthodox denominations, though of comparatively recent origin, are highly favored, and prosper even beyond the expectations of their founders.

But though Unitarianism is now pretty well understood in the east, and its advocates cannot there hope to hide the peculiarities of their creed, it is otherwise in our great western valley. Here the deadly upas has, in many places, been but recently planted ; and although already poisonous influences are shed from its branches, and in its shade the tender plants of spiritual religion are beginning to wither, the bitter fruit has not yet become sufficiently mature to demonstrate to all its pernicious tendency.

Here, as in the land of the Pilgrims formerly, the fatal errors of Unitarian theology are introduced by studied efforts to conceal the distinctive features of the system. Both communities and individuals are approached artfully, and attempts made to conciliate their favor, with

great care not to reveal any of the peculiar and alarming doctrines held by "liberal Christians." At first, their views of the divinity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Ghost, atonement, human depravity, regeneration, &c., are kept out of sight. The reasons which dictate this course are obvious. It is known that where orthodox views of the distinguishing doctrines of the Bible are entertained, having a strong hold on the understanding and the heart, they are seldom displaced by open assault. To attempt this would be a hazardous experiment. And anything like a distinct avowal of doctrines which are at war with almost every important gospel truth, as understood by the orthodox, would too thoroughly arouse attention, and place the assailed in the attitude of defense. Let it only be distinctly known what must be sacrificed, what doctrines given up, in order to embrace Unitarianism, and the door would, in most cases, be closed against its approach: even if the sophistry of the arguments employed could not be readily detected, the most unskilled would be able to rebuke the vain reasoner by a direct appeal to the Scriptures. But experience has proved that the worst of errors can be insinuated by degrees, if only its antagonism for *the truth* is kept out of view. The corrupting

heaven can spread its influence through the community without creating alarm. Thus in preaching and in conversation, whatever doctrines are known to be subversive of evangelical principles, are withheld, or presented in disguise. The terms employed to communicate them are conformed, nearly as possible, to those used by the orthodox, and often well calculated to deceive.

But when some advantage has been gained, when confidence in the inspiration and reverence for the authority of the Scriptures are weakened; and spiritual, experimental religion, is supplanted by some vain conceits about the dignity of human nature; it is then thought safe to write, and preach, and talk, with more boldness.

These charges may seem severe, and I am reluctant to make them; but duty to the reader requires the exposure. Such "pious frauds" are worthy of a darker age, and deserve the severest animadversion.

The following facts are known to many, and, if questioned, can be substantiated by ample testimony:—

When societies are first formed, there is a manifest unwillingness to assume the name of Unitarians, or in any way to make known the peculiarities of their belief, as is done by the

different branches of the orthodox church. They call themselves "Independent Congregationalists," "Bible Christians," "Disciples of Christ," or something of the kind; and instead of publishing a candid, intelligible confession of their faith, after a few negative propositions, they are either wholly silent on the subject of the peculiar doctrines they intend to teach, or state them in such equivocal terms as are likely to deceive. On controverted points they profess to "believe as Christ and his apostles did." A passage of Scripture is wrested from its connection, and quoted as the belief of the sect. But if asked what meaning they attach to the language, they will not, as sensible men should, state their views plainly in other words, but simply repeat the passage, perhaps intimating that they mean the same that the writer meant.

Another attempt at concealment is prosecuted on this wise: Some doctrines are stated in the very language employed in the orthodox confessions of faith, while they secretly hold views wholly at variance with the commonly received opinions on the same points. A tract now in circulation here declares that "Unitarians believe in human depravity, the doctrine of atonement, regeneration," &c. ; while, from the pulpit, we hear distinguished honors ascribed to "our

divine Master," and prayer is offered that the people may be "washed in his blood." All this sounds so much like the truth, that the uninformed would hardly suspect that such language is intended, by those who use it, to be consistent with an utter denial of the essential divinity of Christ; and that man is naturally corrupt; that the justice of God demanded any satisfaction in order to the forgiveness of sin; or that a change of heart means anything more than a change of opinion, followed, perhaps, by some outward reformation in the manners: yet such is the fact. No class of infidels are more strongly opposed to these doctrines, as they are held by the orthodox churches. With persons sufficiently committed to the support of their establishments, and those they cannot hope to win, the mask is thrown off, and their unbelief avowed in language too plain to be mistaken. They can then declare what they believe as plainly as is necessary; but, when they would lead away the children of pious parents, they adopt the very phraseology to which the persons addressed have been accustomed. Thus, with good words and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the simple, and obliterate from the mind what early impressions were made by the humbling doctrines

of the cross. There is reason to fear this management is often successful. Some are found already so far corrupted as to laugh at the idea of experimental religion, and assert, with profane appeals to God, their preference for the Unitarian doctrines. To these, the restraints and requirements of the gospel, as preached by orthodox ministers, have become irksome; and they seek religious instructions better adapted to the feelings of the carnal heart.

In some cases parents, to whose believing hearts Christ is precious, for permitting the apparently kind and insinuating attentions of those in whose *professions* there was nothing alarming, have found, when too late to remedy the mistake, that the poison of error had been instilled, and are doomed to the bitter disappointment of seeing their children alienated from the right ways of the Lord.

Still further evidence of the Jesuitism complained of may be seen in many of the books and tracts distributed through their sabbath schools, and otherwise. Very few, if any, of these are found to contain a plain and intelligible statement of their real belief. It is insinuated, taught covertly, and variously implied, in both their propositions and reasonings; *but it has been so well disguised under a studied*

conformity to orthodox phraseology, that persons, entertaining views essentially different, have read them without disapprobation. But we must not suppose that all their books are of this kind: far from it. In due time, as it is thought they can bear it, families are furnished with a fuller development of the theory they have begun to regard with favor. This course some have excused and justified as "judicious management"—and so, perhaps, it is: considered simply as a means to an end, it has a manifest adaptation. "The children of this world are" often "wiser in their generation than the children of light."

We have not room for anything further on this subject here. Enough has been said to show, that in the east and in the west, and wherever Unitarianism has been planted, it has been, in a greater or less degree, (according as temptations have more or less prevailed.) disguised and secreted from public view; or, to use the words of Dr. Miller, "in all ages, from the time of Ebion to the present hour, where the mass of the surrounding population was orthodox, Unitarians have manifested a disposition to *conceal their sentiments, to equivocate, to evade, and even solemnly to deny them, when questioned, and to disguise themselves under the*

garb of orthodoxy, to a degree which no other sect calling itself Christian ever manifested.”—Letters, p. 245.

All that could possibly be said in extenuation of such a course will never satisfy an honest mind. No man living can account for it on principles which will not stamp the character of conscious weakness and deep corruption on the cause it is designed to advance.

CHAPTER VII.

UNITARIAN MISREPRESENTATIONS.

WE have seen before how Unitarian doctors handle the word of God: that when any passage teaches what seems to them contrary to the nature of the subject, or to what is taught in other places, they “do not hesitate to modify, restrain, and turn from their most obvious meaning, the words of Scripture.” This rule of interpretation, which was adopted by Dr. Channing, and has been found wonderfully convenient, has of late been applied to *facts* as well as to the testimony borne by inspired men. There are many things in the history of Unitarianism, which, to be creditable, need not a little modifying, restraining, and turning away from their

most obvious meaning. Several facts were, as we think, thus modified and restrained, in the course of lectures delivered in the borough of Meadville, Pa., by the Rev. Mr. Stebbins during the winter of 1847-8.

Passing by many palpable errors touching the history of the primitive church, and the alleged Unitarianism of the early and apostolic fathers, the following will possibly seem a little strange to some of our orthodox friends in the east.

The lecturer, having represented the prospects of their cause as peculiarly flattering in New-England, where their principles are "spreading rapidly," "going down into the hearts of the people," etc., assured us that "orthodoxy in the east is a very different thing from orthodoxy here in the west."

In confirmation of this statement it was said, that Dr. Beecher, while in Boston, was esteemed perfectly orthodox ; but, having removed to the west, he was soon suspected—his sentiments were too liberal—so he was arraigned and expelled for heresy. As evidence on the same point, we were also informed, that in New-England ministers of the orthodox denominations frequently exchange pulpits with Unitarians; meet with them at the communion service;

showing that while they entertain some difference of opinion, they can ecclesiastically fellowship each other as Christians. The honored name of our lamented Fisk was frequently introduced, and the lecturer, who "*was several years pleasantly associated with him,*" had peculiar satisfaction in rebuking our exclusiveness, by an appeal to the example of this great and good man.

In all this there seemed to us a manifest attempt to "modify and restrain," and turn away from the most obvious truth in the premises. Any person without information on the subject from other sources, and having confidence in the speaker, must have been led to form an opinion very wide of the truth, and exceedingly unfavorable to the orthodoxy of the New-England churches.

That the several evangelical denominations in that region fellowship or fraternize with Unitarians, in the manner alledged, *is not true*. They doubtless hold some of them in high esteem as intelligent and philanthropic men, and as such are glad to co-operate with them in some of the benevolent enterprises of the age, such as the cause of temperance, antislavery, etc. Association of this kind is right, and has our unqualified approbation ; but the confident

boasting about frequent ministerial exchanges, and other acts, by which Unitarians are said to be recognized as a true branch of the Christian family, is certainly without sufficient foundation, and I do not hesitate to pronounce it an injurious and slanderous representation of the churches which were complimented for their liberality. Our New-England brethren will not be proud of such fame, and we are right sure they do not deserve it.

As to the individuals whose names were mentioned, there was surely a strange misstatement of facts, if not an intentional misrepresentation. The venerable Beecher has never been suspected of the slightest inclination toward Unitarianism, much less has he been "tried and expelled" for the heresy. And the sainted Fisk would almost, if it were possible, leave the songs of heaven, and the vision of that divine Redeemer in whose merits alone he trusted, to refute the charge of having in any way given countenance or encouragement to the infidelity of those who deny the Lord that bought them. He is well known to have held the system now advocated by Mr. S. in deep abhorrence; and for his former pupil, who, in this relation, was associated with the doctor in the academy at Wilbraham, to abuse the kindness of his

condescending instructor, by falsely representing that he received to his fellowship as Christians, and bid them God speed, those who were known to be Unitarians, is injustice to the memory of the worthy and honored dead, which we would be glad to believe was not premeditated.

Unitarians have also shown some skill in their attempts to "restrain, modify, and turn from their most obvious meaning," the doctrines held by orthodox Christians. Because we believe in and worship a trinity of divine persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, existing in the indivisible unity of the Godhead, they charge us with the absurdity of believing that three persons are one person, and one God three gods. The puerile folly of this attempt has been sufficiently exploded, but connected with it is another false accusation, which seems to demand a moment's notice. We are represented as dishonoring the Father, by paying homage to the Son; and destroying the beautiful simplicity of divine worship, by multiplying the objects of our religious adoration. To this it is enough to reply that all men are commanded to "honor the Son even as they honor the Father;" and that believing in the real unity or oneness of the divine essence, the Trinitarian

does not multiply the objects of his hope and trust, but worships the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as the *one only living and true God*. In whichever of these revealed characters he contemplates the infinite Jehovah, he loves supremely, and pays the highest adoration ; nor has he any occasion to graduate his devotion to make it accord with the nature and dignity of the person to whom it is addressed. The God he adores, though clearly revealed as a trinity of divine persons united after an ineffable manner, is God alone, and he dares not bow down to any other.

But it is surely with an ill grace that Unitarians talk of distracting the mind by directing it to several objects of worship. They boast of the intelligibility of their faith, and the simplicity of their worship, as having one object only ; but assertions of this kind can have little influence when they are confronted with the plain facts in the case. Let it be borne in mind that in attempting "to restrain, modify, and turn away from their most obvious meaning," that class of texts which teach, beyond all controversy, that Christ was worshiped both while he was on earth and after his ascension to heaven, they affect to make a distinction between *supreme* and *subordinate* worship ; the

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latter of which, they say, belongs to Christ because of his exalted rank and important offices : nor do they deny that other creatures are likewise entitled to share in this subordinate worship, or respectful reverence, in proportion as their characters are excellent and their services useful. Thus, by their own showing, while they profess to worship God only, they allow the propriety of worshipping Christ, and even other beings greatly inferior to him, if the worship paid them be only in proportion to their respective claims. Now this does look, not a little, like dividing and distracting the mind by multiplying the objects of its religious regard. And who is to determine how much of this "subordinate worship" is due to Christ, and how much should be given to the several saints and wise men of past ages? Would it not greatly assist the devotions of their weaker brethren, if those who invented this "beautifully simple system" should annex to it some kind of graduating scale, designed to show just how much worship we may offer to Jesus Christ, how much to his virgin mother, and how much to the other saints, without danger of falling into idolatry? That is a strange exhibition of *simplicity* in which our neighbors glory so much ; and we cannot resist the suspicion that

this feature of their system was forgotten when the interpretation alluded to was given.

Perhaps no doctrine esteemed important by orthodox believers is more offensive to Unitarians than that of a vicarious atonement, or the sufferings of Christ in our stead, and no doctrine could be more shamefully misrepresented.

Our views are generally caricatured somewhat on this wise: We are said to believe in a God whose character is that of a stern, inflexible tyrant, who will neither pity nor forgive the offender until his vengeance is satiated with the blood of some victim provided for this purpose. The following illustration is sometimes given:—"A father has two little sons, one of whom has transgressed his commandment, but on reflection becomes deeply sensible of the wrong, makes humble confession, and seeks for pardon; but the father has no ear for his entreaties, he heeds not the bitter anguish and breaking heart of his child, but with his brow contracted, his lips compressed, and vengeance flashing in his eye, he demands the infliction of punishment to the utmost. At this crisis the other son offers himself as a substitute, and is accepted. The exasperated father afflicts him with terrible severity, is pleased to see him writhe, and hear him groan, until, by



the full execution of the penalty, his anger has spent its fury on the innocent, unoffending child, and he is satisfied. He now smiles on the real offender, and freely forgives him because of the *atonement* made by his brother."

This, according to Unitarians, is our view of the most precious doctrine of the atonement—the sacrifice of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. A more false and slanderous statement could not be made, and there is abundant reason to pity the man who can be guilty of such impiety as must stain the character of him who framed it. Sure as the word of God is true, that atoning Sacrifice is our only ground of hope, and he who has scoffed at it as an exhibition of cruelty, vindictiveness, and rage, will learn that such was the method devised and executed by infinite wisdom and goodness to save sinners; that on the cross God manifest in the flesh was reconciling the world unto himself by bearing the iniquities of us all; that his vicarious sufferings were then, are now, and shall be to all eternity, the theme of wonder and praise to angels, principalities, and powers. O, when the mists and fogs of error have all vanished, what a fearful remembrance will wait, through everlasting ages, on him who vilely caricatured

the only means by which the guilty can be forgiven, and treated with scorn the gracious offers of pardon through the blood of the covenant. May it appear in the judgment that even he fled at last to the merits of that blood as his only hope, that he did not go into eternity until pardon for his high offense was humbly sought, and his peace made with God through the atonement!

The orthodox doctrine on this subject is so far from justifying the views which Unitarians are so eager to impute to us, that it reveals the divine character in the most lovely and encouraging aspect. If the evangelical Christian often lingers in the garden where his Saviour suffered in his stead, and dwells on the scenes of Calvary with subdued, inexpressible emotion, it is because he sees wonders of divine love and mercy there. He gazes on the cross, and repeats, with a depth of meaning of which Unitarianism can know absolutely nothing, "*Herein is love*, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." In this we have the strongest possible demonstration that "God is love;" "for he commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us;" "Thanks be to God for his unspeak-

able gift ;” “ We love him because he first loved us :” and, though we can never fathom the depth of that eternal affection and merciful kindness toward lost and ruined men, we will fall before him to acknowledge with adoring gratitude, “ God so loved the world ” — how much neither man nor angel can tell ; the fountain is his own infinite nature, and the streams have been welling up from its lowest depths ; but thus much we do know :—“ in his love and his pity he hath redeemed ” us with a Ransom of infinite value—“ he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.”

Lead the unbeliever in this precious gospel doctrine to the mount where they crucified him ; point him to the indescribable anguish and agony of the innocent Sufferer ; repeat the testimony, “ It pleased the Father to bruise him ; ” “ He hath put him to grief ; ” “ Laid upon him the iniquity of us all ; ” “ He bore our sins in his own body on the tree ; ” “ By his stripes we are healed ; ” and he will turn away offended. The veil is on his heart, and the false medium through which he looks presents everything in a distorted and unseemly aspect. Perhaps, muttering his abhorrence of such apparent cruelty and injustice, he will profess himself unable

to love a God who can forgive sin only through a vicarious atonement. His system requires no such expedient, and he is bold enough to pronounce it unnecessary. True, he will admit the Bible seems to assert something of the kind: but he denies the inspiration of the writers; charges them with making statements to suit the prejudices of their countrymen; and assumes the right of interpreting their most positive and unequivocal declarations as mere figures of speech. Merciful God! great indeed was thy long-suffering that waited in the days of Noah! but how much greater is that which waiteth in our own day, met and resisted as it is by these "vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." 1 Tim. vi, 20. Alas! how incorrigible is the heart of man when perverted! how obstinate in its errors! how blind to the noonday light, "above the brightness of the sun," that shines around it!

Such was Paul once, before there fell "as it had been scales from his eyes:" but when his vision was purged, and he bowed the pride of reason to the authority of God, he looked with faith on the cross; saw in the Crucified justice and mercy meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other; and could thenceforth exclaim, "Yea, doubtless, I count all


things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

This is a theme of deepest interest, and I leave it reluctantly. The reader is referred to what was said in a previous chapter on the priesthood and mediation of Christ; where the other Unitarian objections to a vicarious atonement are sufficiently exploded, and the truth established by an appeal to the Scriptures.

UNITARIAN SCHOOLS AND • COLLEGES.

Is it safe and right for those who hold orthodox sentiments to patronize them?

There are but few institutions of any considerable importance in the country in which Unitarians have the dominant influence. Harvard College, although founded and principally endowed by Trinitarians, has, through the defection and management of its officers, for many years been a fountain of error. It is alledged, on no doubtful evidence, that a part, at least, of the funds by which that ancient and honored institution has been sustained, are grossly perverted from the purposes originally contemplated by the donors. This abuse of public confidence, together with the too painfully apparent effects that flow from such imperfect and distorted views of the Christian system as are taught there, has forced many, however reluctantly, to withdraw their patronage. Indeed, that parent must very lightly esteem the religious faith and character of his son, who can expose him to the imminent dangers incident to a connection with Harvard. The associations are as chilling to the heart of piety, as



the religious dogmas taught are subversive of an intelligent and Scriptural faith.

There has been for a few years a Unitarian theological school established in Meadville, Pa., which, though of vastly inferior grade, is probably destined, for a time at least, to be a fountain of error to send its noxious streams through our western valley. Three classes of religious teachers are likely to be furnished from this school, namely, Unitarians, Universalists, and Arians, who modestly style themselves "*Christians*." These societies may differ in some unimportant matters, as their adherents respectively differ among themselves, each believing what is right in his own eyes. But in the prominent features of their systems, they are understood to agree. They fraternize with each other, and mutually engage in the same hostility against the most precious doctrines of the gospel. Those who believe in these representations of the Christian system will probably give their support to the institution, and to these I have nothing to say. A few young men whose religious views are unsettled, and some parents, without due consideration, may patronize this school from motives of economy, *expecting* to obtain a knowledge of some *important* branches of science without meddling

with the peculiar theology of the teachers. Though it is confessedly a theological school, and sustained at considerable cost, for the especial object of disseminating Unitarianism, it is gravely represented to young men that they can study the same text-books which are adopted at other institutions, and that no efforts will be made to change or modify their views of religious truth. How such propositions can be reconciled with the untiring and palpable attempts at proselytism, with which many in the community have been plied, others must determine. I will not introduce the reader to the interior of "Divinity Hall," nor write a word in disparagement of the literary qualifications of the gentlemen employed as teachers. They are my neighbors, esteemed for their many social virtues, and honored for their industrious zeal in the cause to which they are devoted. Toward them personally no unkind feeling is cherished; and it would grieve me much to interpose the least barrier to their success, if their labors could be prosecuted without inflicting a most serious injury on society. But if my neighbor elevates a false light, by which the bewildered mariner may be led among shoals and rocks till he make shipwreck of faith, I must be allowed to remonstrate. If he seduce

the simple and inexperienced from the plain paths of gospel truth, into the labyrinths of speculative error, substituting for the pure and undefiled religion of Christ the doctrines of a false philosophy; if he do this under the plausible pretense of advancing the cause of science, it is due to the community on which the injury is perpetrated, that the tendency of the influences under which a student is brought in such an institution be faithfully pointed out.

To the Christian reader, who believes the Bible teaches the necessity of spiritual, experimental religion, the following reasons are suggested for withholding patronage from this and other such schools :—

1. The strongest influences under which the student is brought are wholly unfavorable to evangelical piety; and you have no right to place either your son or yourself in circumstances of such extreme moral and spiritual danger. But in what does that danger consist? Perhaps you will be told that no direct efforts are made in the class-room to inculcate the peculiar views of theology held by the teachers. If so, you may rest assured that this is a false representation, and unreasonable as false. No sensible person will, on reflection, believe that a professedly theological school is sustained by

the most strenuous enemies of the orthodox faith without any intention to disseminate among the pupils their own latitudinarian notions. The absurdity of the proposition is too obvious to require any further exposure. The truth is, young men who resort there find *all efforts which give any promise of success*, both directly and indirectly, employed to establish in their minds the dogmas of Unitarianism. The system exerts a modifying influence on the whole range of moral or ethical studies. The business of the teacher will be rather to establish principles of interpretation and propositions in philosophy which are at war with the orthodox faith, than to attempt the most difficult task of proving Unitarianism from the Bible. When he has mystified the mind by some hypothetical statements dignified with the appellation of philosophical principles, it is assumed that all the doctrines of revelation must be understood so as to agree with these statements. Thus the pride of reason is flattered, and the pupil, whose vision has been obscured by fogs of error, feels authorized to reject or fritter away the unsearchable riches of gospel truth, because he fails to see its reasonableness. The entire influence of the teacher, be it more or less, with all the religious instruction which he directly or

indirectly imparts, will, of course, be in favor of Unitarianism. Books, tracts, and periodicals, are industriously circulated, in which sophistry and learning, wit and ridicule, are variously employed to misrepresent the faith of orthodox believers on the one hand, and on the other to sustain contrary views by an array of inapposite proof texts, wrested from their connection, and forced into the service of error by applying unauthorized and false principles of interpretation. Among the students the prevailing spirit is decidedly opposed to evangelical religion. The devotions of the most pious are treated with levity and ridicule, as indications of weakness, or the offspring of fanaticism. The precious doctrines of atonement and spiritual regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost, through faith in the blood of Christ, are discarded. The preaching of the cross, in the only true and Scriptural sense, being set aside as foolishness, these misguided youth become vain in their imaginations, and boast not a little of the dignity and supposed moral capabilities of our fallen and depraved natures. True, it is said of them and their teachers that they are men of liberal sentiments, and the student is not obliged to receive their notions, unless they please him. *But, alas !* doctrines so congenial to the corrupt

heart, are likely to please the unconverted youth; a religion that harmonizes with the sinful propensities is very readily embraced. The student has an open ear for the counsels of an instructor who extols the noble faculty of reason; talks about freedom from the shackles of superstition; and informs him, that in reading even the Bible, he is allowed to call in question the authenticity of any passage which *seems to him* to state or require what is unreasonable. Encouraged by the temerity of his superiors, he learns to reject as spurious whatever he cannot interpret to suit his own views of propriety. If this is not found a sufficient relief from the testimony borne against the error he seeks to adopt, the authority of whole books is set aside, by the timely hint of his teacher that some learned men have denied their authenticity. The painful results are but too often soon manifest. Even tyros, hardly fit to be let loose from their leading strings, retail the hackneyed cant of Unitarianism, denying the authenticity of parts, or the inspiration of the whole, of the Bible, as may be necessary to maintain their position, and escape the shafts of truth leveled against their doctrines.

Even pious young men, when exposed to the influences surrounding them at such schools,

must suffer immense loss, if their religious character and happiness are not entirely ruined. They may enter with the greatest reverence for the sacred Scriptures, with delight in the evangelical preaching of the word, and the exercises of believing prayer; they may repose a holy confidence in the merit of a sufficient and almighty Saviour, and look for eternal life only through the blood of the everlasting covenant : but it will soon be felt that the frigid dogmas of Unitarian theology are like the coldness of death to the warm heart of piety, and that the whole current of influences which have to be encountered are like a sweeping flood, too often, alas ! quite overwhelming to the inexperienced youth. The ardor of religious feeling is quenched ; the closet visited less frequently, and with less pleasure ; devotional books begin to appear a little tinctured with enthusiasm ; and the Bible itself is read with less confidence that its truths are spoken *in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*. Having thus far imbibed the prevailing spirit of the place, he hears orthodox ministers and churches denounced as driveling, narrow-minded bigots, slaves to confessions, and enthusiasts ; while their enemies are lauded as *men of liberal principles*, who have thrown off the shackles of superstition, and elevated the

godlike reason of man to its throne as judge in all matters of religious faith and duty.

Place any young man under such circumstances, and it is amazing mercy if he fall not into this snare of the devil, and be left to count the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; even scoffing at the divinity of the Saviour, who was once precious to his soul.

To show that I have not exaggerated the dangers to which vital religion is exposed in such associations, and also to put both the young and the old on their guard, I close this chapter with the testimony of one who had painful experience of the evils against which the reader is affectionately warned. The reference is to Harvard College; but the same may be said of all institutions where Unitarianism has the dominant influence. This testimony was published some years ago in Philadelphia, by a gentleman who manifestly knew whereof he affirmed, having had bitter experience of the dangers he describes: "The most able description can convey but a very imperfect impression of the thousand influences which are there brought to bear upon the heart of every student, to chill his piety, and weaken the hold which the great truths of the gospel may have

had on him ; to induce him to look upon the Scriptures (except in name) with a skeptical mind, and some portion of them with a sneering infidelity. And all this is effected in the bosom of the incautious youth almost imperceptibly. While the poison of error is insinuating itself into his mind, and the sleep of spiritual death is coming over him, his ears are charmed and his fears are lulled by the captivating notes of charity, liberality, the improvements of the age, and the requiem that is for ever sung over creeds and confessions, bigotry and superstition.

“This I consider myself bound to testify before the world, that the influence there exerted against sound religious sentiments and vital godliness is like a sweeping flood to the unfortified minds of youth—it is resistless. I am acquainted with no situation where, in my view, (and I speak from sad experience,) the principle of evangelical piety and faith in the doctrines of the cross would be less likely to be obtained, or, if possessed, would be placed in circumstances of greater peril.”—*Spirit of the Pilgrims*, vol. iii, p. 325.

Here I thought to close ; but the deep and painful interest felt in the subject forbids it. Reader, are you familiar with the religious his-

tory of New-England, and especially of Harvard College, her most ancient and honored seat of science? Since the poison of error was cast into that fountain, what streams of death have rolled over the land of the Pilgrims, engulfing in their dark waters thousands who are the children of devout and praying parents! But few who have been educated at Harvard for the last thirty years have escaped the fatal infection, or have been able to recover fully from the shock which their religious faith there sustained; and those few look back upon the dangers escaped with amazement, and upward with warmest gratitude to their almighty Deliverer. These things are yet transpiring, and the facilities for obtaining a Unitarian education are multiplied. Nor has time in the least diminished the dangers to which our youth are exposed in such seminaries.

The contrary is true: the danger is even greater than in years past. While the young man was left in possession of his Bible—the whole unmutated Bible—he might defend the truth with some success. Even when unable to detect the sophisms behind which the advocates of error seek to entrench themselves, he could appeal confidently to the authoritative statements of the sacred writers. But in the more

full development of their system, Unitarians have fretted away every vestige of authority from the oracles of God. They have only denied the essential doctrines of natural depravity, atonement, regeneration, etc., assumed that the manner of the divine communications is entirely the work of men, and consequence, stamped with many imperfections. This feature of the subject was presented in the previous chapter, and is mentioned here only to show how little ground there is to hope for the safety of young men exposed to such influences. If they escape, it will be by having suffered much loss; if saved, it will be so as by

Pious reader, if you meditate such a contention for yourself, or your son whom you will educate for usefulness to the church and world, let me beseech you to pause, and consider the cost. Dare you, for paltry considerations, expose spiritual and eternal interests to fearful hazards? No, if you fear God, you will not do it.

THE END.

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